

# THE ISA JOURNAL

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RESILIENCE | NO 25 | MAY 2021



- WHAT ABOUT STAFF WELLBEING?
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# Welcome

FROM THE CEO

## Rudi Elliott Lockhart



It has been the strangest of times. The challenges have come quick and have required us all to learn unexpected skills to meet them. Over the last eighteen months we have had periods where the vast majority of pupils were required to stay away from school sites for months on end. Schools have had to rapidly roll out mass online learning for pupils. Two years of public exams have been replaced by a chaotic process amid multiple

Government U-turns. We have seen schools turn into centres for mass virus testing. Some schools have had their business models upended and heads have been under real pressure to keep the show on the road. Heads have made detailed plans in the light of Government advice only to have to rip them up and start again when the advice changed with a day's notice. Heads have found themselves working through every holiday with next to no respite. Most challengingly, we have lost members of our school communities to the virus and we have seen some of our pupils lose family members. It has been brutal at times.

Yet, despite all of these challenges we can be incredibly proud of the work that everyone has done to ensure that pupils have continued to receive high quality education, that teachers have been supported as best they can as they deliver for pupils, and that schools have managed to weather the storm more effectively than was thought likely this time last year. There's no question how difficult it has been at times, but independent schools and all who work in them have shown remarkable resilience in meeting the challenges.

There could scarcely be a better time to take a look at what we mean by resilience and the different types of resilience that can be seen running through our schools. This edition of the Journal both celebrates the different types of resilience on display within independent schools in these difficult times and offers some insights into the ways we can build resilience and support each other. Lisa

Jones offers a crucial focus on ensuring the wellbeing of staff. Matthew Phillips sets out strategies for how to cultivate resilience. Diane Browne explains how resilience underpins the development of other skills, ensuring that in the face of challenge pupils can bounce rather than break. Matthew Wright looks at how schools can become resilient with green energy. Deborah Leek-Bailey describes how to help bereaved children to develop resilience and offers practical resources for schools. Rhiannon Cutler offers a different take on resilience, taking a look at the impact of COVID on independent schools' finances and what the signs are of financial resilience. Amid all of this focus on pupils, teachers, and schools, it's important to have Adam Greenwood outlining how combining Headship with undertaking a professional doctorate can give an opportunity for a level of reflection on the practice of being a head. Finally, there's encouragement to look forward and consider how to remain resilient after retirement from Rob Haworth.

Of course, although we've all faced the same COVID crisis, every experience has been different, and these articles can only scratch the surface of the ways that independent schools and those working within them have met the challenges they've faced. I hope that membership of ISA has been a key part of developing resilience for all, not only through the support offered by HQ, but also through the strength of the peer network that comes from being part of something with 558 other professionals.

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Front cover photo : The Grange School (N)



Leehurst Swan School (SW)



Herries Preparatory School (LW)



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Adcote School (M)



The Webber Independent School (LN)

# School News

SCHOOLS FROM ACROSS THE ISA SHARE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

## ORCHARD SCHOOL AND NURSERY PUPILS BECOME BEST-SELLING AUTHORS (LN)

The pupils of Orchard School and Nursery have officially become Amazon best-selling authors. The small prep school self-published a collection of poems written by its pupils on their observations and experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, which jumped straight into Amazon's list of Best-Selling Poetry Books.

The book, 'Lockdown – Poems & Thoughts', is a touching collection of poems, with contributions from children aged 20 months to 9 years across the school. At times poignant and often humorous, topics range from losing family members, to home-schooling struggles, through to thoughts on chickens and the Prime Minister!



## THE MULBERRY HOUSE SCHOOL PUPILS' ARTWORK EXHIBITED AT THE V&A MUSEUM (LN)

Evocative, lockdown-inspired artwork created by pupils at The Mulberry House School is set to enter the V&A Museum's permanent collection. Pupils reflected on the current global crisis by producing drawings, sculptures, banners and handwritten notes which preserve a rich portrait of life under lockdown. Using the imagery of rainbows, first conceived by families in the Lombardy region in Italy, children considered the phrase 'Andrà Tutto Bene' – which translates as 'All Will Be Well' – to produce individual responses to the pandemic.

Several works of art were selected for display at the V&A's 'All Will Be Well' exhibition, and will eventually enter the world-leading V&A Museum of Childhood's permanent collection. Well done!



## LEEHRST SWAN PUPIL SELECTED TO JOIN THE TRUE ATHLETE PROJECT (SW)

Leehurst Swan pupil, Ruaraidh, has been selected as one of 34 young athletes across the world to be part of the True Athlete Project. The True Athlete Project matches mentors with young athletes who "not only receive the personalised nurturing support of an incredible role model, but also a personalised mental skills training programme."

Ruaraidh has been paired with James Stephenson, a GB Lightweight rower and 2012 World Triathlete Champion. Through the True Athlete Project, Ruaraidh and James will cover sporting themes such as performance, identity and values, mindfulness, community and social responsibility, and nature & connectedness.



## MALVERN ST JAMES GIRLS' SCHOOL SCOOPS PIONEERING MENTAL HEALTH AWARD (M)

Malvern St James Girls' School has achieved the School Mental Health Award which is delivered by the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools. The school was awarded a gold standard for its outstanding mental health and wellbeing provision.

Malvern St James provides a wide range of activities to boost the wellbeing of pupils and staff, including offering Youth Mental Health First Aid training to a cross section of staff and Sixth Form, Wellbeing Champion and Wellbeing Ambassador peer support structures for staff and pupils, mindfulness, mental health and wellbeing lessons taught through PSHEEC and using social media platforms to signpost support and information.

Headmistress, Olivera Raraty, said: "I am extremely proud and delighted that MSJ's outstanding pastoral provision in support of positive mental health has been recognised in this way."



## FUNDRAISING ACROSS ISA MEMBERS' SCHOOLS

**Avon House Preparatory School (LN), Ursuline Preparatory School (E), Leehurst Swan (SW), LVS Ascot (LW), Shoreham College (LS), Farlington School (LS)**

Staff and pupils across all ISA Members' schools continue to show their kindness in fundraising for charity. Here are just a few examples of your excellent efforts. Don't forget to share your news with us at [comms@isaschools.org.uk](mailto:comms@isaschools.org.uk)!



Avon House Preparatory School did not let lockdown stop them from marching ahead with their termly fundraiser. Pupils, parents and staff travelled the 874-mile journey from Land's End to John O'Groats by mapping their daily miles walked, and raised £2,929 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Both Leehurst Swan and Ursuline Preparatory School were filled with colour and laughter on Red Nose Day as they celebrated and raised money for Comic Relief by dressing as superheroes both fictional and real. Congratulations to the schools which raised £400 and £430 respectively.

Head Boy at LVS Ascot, Lawrence, organised an exciting online quiz featuring a scavenger hunt, teachers demonstrating their dancefloor moves, a guess the music Tik Tok challenge and more! The quiz raised over £1,100 for NHS Charities Together.



Shoreham College pupils, family and staff joined in their Off the Fence charity fundraiser 'Woolly Hat Day', raising £1,230!

Staff are keen fundraisers too, with Farlington School's Librarian and Examinations Officer, Teresa Stonestreet, raising money for Cancer Research UK by 'marching through March' each year: walking 10,000 steps per day in March every year for seven years in memory of her great niece. Over the past six years, Teresa has raised almost £5,000!



Credit Robina Weermeijer

LISA JONES

## What about staff wellbeing?

Mental health, wellbeing and resilience are topics that are much higher on agendas and rightly so, especially given the events of the last year. More people are beginning to understand and appreciate just how important it is to look after our mental wellbeing and I think it's fair to say that all of us have had our mental health challenged in some way during this pandemic. As educators, you will be acutely aware of the rhetoric we had surrounding getting our young people back to school for the sake of their learning and wellbeing. There is no doubt that our children and young people have been impacted by this pandemic and the disruption it has caused, but what about you? What about all the staff who have shown up day in, day out and worked tirelessly to provide a continued education? What about their mental health and wellbeing? This is something that often gets overlooked as so much of the focus is on our children and young people.

According to a YouGov survey commissioned by the charity Education Support (2020), half of the UK's school teachers (52%) say their mental health declined during the first stage of the coronavirus pandemic. More encouragingly however, 81% reported feeling supported by colleagues and 72% by their Senior Management Team. Whilst it is understandable that we would see an increase in feelings of stress and anxiety in the circumstances, what impact does this have on our brains and subsequently, mental, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing?

What impact does this have on our brains and subsequently, mental, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing?

### Stress and our brains

There are many different factors that influence our stress response including our environment, age, sex and context (the perceived stressor) which subsequently produce a highly co-ordinated and complex orchestrated neuro-symphony of stress (Baram and Joëls, 2009). This response is co-ordinated by the fast acting sympathetic nervous system which sends neural signals to release adrenalin and the slower acting Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis which receives hormonal messages from our adrenal glands to secrete cortisol. Stressors can be a threat, challenge or opportunity. We feel 'stressed' when real or imagined pressures exceed our perceived ability to cope, but not all stress is bad. Eustress is 'good stress' that motivates and facilitates learning and change.

When the physiological stress response is repeatedly activated it creates a state of heightened vigilance. On the one hand, this is very useful for your brain as it is on high alert to threat but on the other hand, it results in leaving you feel emotionally exhausted, anxious and probably struggling to sleep which in turn causes feelings of irritability, less ability to emotionally regulate and lack of concentration. As you will no doubt be aware, this can become a vicious cycle (McKay, 2020).

We know that too much stress for too long can have serious implications for a person's mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing (Rozeske et al., 2013). This is particularly true when a person is less able to keep their resilience reserves topped up sufficiently to buffer stress. One of the most effective ways to build resilience and buffer stress is social connection and that's the one thing that most of us have lacked over this last year. This has been particularly apparent in schools as even though you may have been in the building, no socialising has been allowed which adds to the feeling of isolation and lack of peer support. We have also not been able to enjoy the same things we usually would that might give us



“Resilience is about understanding our thought processes, how they are linked to our feelings and behaviours and learning from the challenges that we face.”

the boost we need in times of stress. It is important to note that every individual responds differently to stress and this is influenced by many factors.

Knowing that prolonged stress can be detrimental to our wellbeing, we need to understand our own triggers, how to recognise signs and symptoms of stress in ourselves and how to manage it. The best way to do this is by building resilience – it is resilience that enables us to manage stress, adversity and life’s challenges.

### So, what is resilience?

Resilience is a word that is frequently and commonly used in many contexts, but what does it actually mean? In the context of mental health and wellbeing, the definition of resilience that I have found most helpful is that provided by Pemberton (2015).

*“It is the capacity to remain flexible in our thoughts, feelings and behaviours when faced by a life disruption or extended periods of pressure so that we emerge from difficulty stronger, wiser and more able.”*

Resilience is not just about bouncing back, a metaphor most commonly associated with resilience, it is far more complex than this. It is about understanding our thought processes, how they are linked to our feelings and behaviours and learning from the challenges that we face. Resilience, therefore, is about personal flexibility, growth and change.

There are key foundations that influence brain health and

wellbeing that are essential to both build resilience and manage stress: sleep, physical activity, nutrition, social connection, intellectual challenge, downtime, emotional intelligence/ awareness, meaning and purpose, and nature. Unsurprisingly, actions included in Public Health England’s guidelines on looking after our mental health and wellbeing strongly echo these: look after your sleep, look after your physical wellbeing, connect with others, keep your mind active, take time to relax, do things you enjoy, talk about worries, set goals and get outside in nature.

These foundations can be addressed individually, but it is connecting them all and understanding how each influences the other, where we are really able to develop resiliency and foster positive wellbeing, mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

I’m sure that most of you are probably aware of these foundations so the question is, how do you implement them? Not just individually, but systemically in an educational context to promote a common language and culture of wellbeing.

### What can you do? Look after yourself, and then model this to others.

- First and foremost, we need to take responsibility for ourselves. I’m sure you are familiar with the saying ‘you can’t pour from an empty cup’. As we know, in order to be there for others, we need to have our own reserves topped up, otherwise we simply have nothing to give. I appreciate this is not always easy and especially not for those of us who choose to go into education or service-based



professions, as our nature is to be there for others.

- Take personal responsibility by developing your emotional awareness. Understand what your individual triggers and stress responses are as well as what you find most useful to manage stress and build your resilience.
- When we are feeling stressed, we are more likely to feel less tolerant, have less patience and be more judgemental which of course will have an impact on our environment and those around us, both staff and students. The most simple and effective way of managing those feelings in the moment is through simple breathing exercises such as box breathing. Focusing on counting and breathing not only distracts the mind and brain as it has to focus its attention on counting, it also activates the parasympathetic nervous system which is responsible for hormone regulation and feeling calm. This is also a very simple exercise that can be used with students.
- Outside of school, find what works for you to help reduce stress and build resilience. For example, being outside in nature, walking, yoga, connecting with friends and family, dancing, sports, reading, meditating, cooking etc.
- Be compassionate with yourself – you’ve been through a lot! We sometimes forget just how much has happened and how incredibly resilient and adaptable people have already been. Allow yourself time to process just how much has happened and celebrate all of the achievements you have already made, no matter how small they may seem.
- One of the biggest causes of increased stress is feeling out of control – stick to a routine to help create a sense of calm amongst the chaos. Accomplish small tasks to keep

you motivated and moving forward.

- **When you’re in school, model all of this!** School leaders need to model healthy behaviours for staff, and as educators, you all need to model this with your students. Model what can be visible in school and share with them strategies you use and they could use outside of school.
- Actively seek to embed a common language and culture of wellbeing and drive the agenda of resilience. This can truly help staff with their wellbeing and to be more resilient. Happier people make happier teams which leads to a more supportive and productive environment.

## Final thoughts

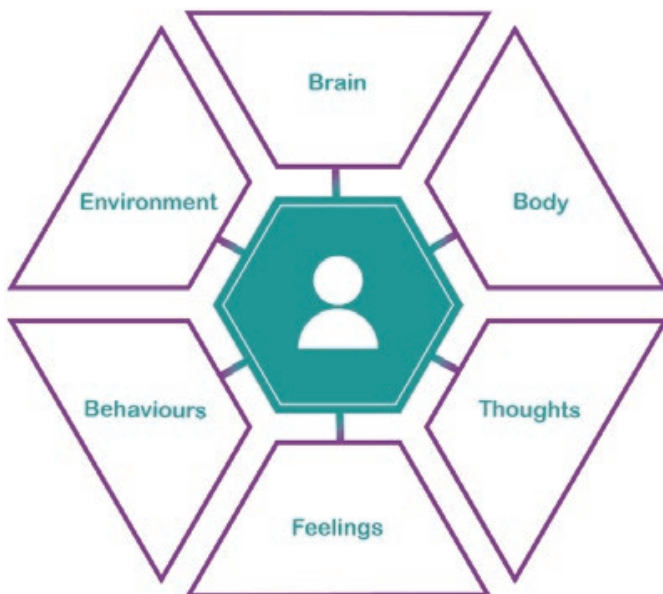
Be mindful that everyone will have had a different experience. From March, some will have been excited to be back and with other people and others will have been feeling incredibly anxious about it. Whilst, as humans, we have an incredible ability to adapt, we must also remember that it can take time to adjust to new environments and behaviours so my recommendation would be to keep the conversations open and allow space for each individual to re-adjust.



Lisa Jones BSc (Hons) MBACP MAC is registered with The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) including their Coaching and Children and Young People’s Divisions.

As a dedicated therapist and passionate trainer, Lisa works both in education and the corporate sector teaching others how to develop resilience and enhance emotional wellbeing. Lisa is trained in various psychological techniques and has a keen interest in brain health, applied neuroscience and the mind-body connection. Lisa believes prevention is better than intervention and feels strongly that people should be equipped with essential skills to confidently manage the stresses in life.

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MATTHEW PHILLIPS

## Cultivating resilience

Resilience has been one of the most important skills for educators and students alike to nurture during the pandemic. School leaders have had to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and to deliver high quality remote learning for their students, while also making alternative arrangements for exams and assessments under significant time pressure. Many students have also completely changed the way that they work, having to become far more self-directed in their approach to learning. Although the ability to effectively respond and react to change and uncertainty cannot be taught overnight, the pandemic has shown the true value of harnessing resilience in the education sector. At OneSchool Global, we have been working on this for a number of years as a way of growing students' explicit skills and routines for self-direction. It is essential that we teach our students how to be resilient, life-ready learners that can take on the challenges of the world once their formal education has finished.

Our approach has been inspired by a variety of research. Notably John Hattie (2012) makes some significant observations about the role of error in learning. He says that feedback and learning thrive in conditions of error or "not knowing" – not in environments where we already know and understand. As you will see later in this article, James Nottingham's work around the Learning Pit (Nottingham, 2007, 2010, 2017) has also been fundamental to our work in developing effective dialogue between teachers and students and building resilience.

Firstly, students who have rehearsed and internalised routines for self-directed learning can better face challenges and uncertainty head on, opting to embrace a difficult situation as opposed to running away from it. This mindset is necessary for success both

in education and in life. Self-directed learners also become more self-confident each and every time they encounter a challenge which they do not know how to solve. Solving a complex problem and navigating uncertainty can give an individual the confidence to know that the next time they are put in a tricky situation, they will be able to reason through it, and find a solution to the problem which they face. This self-confidence snowballs and compounds over time as students face up to and overcome increasingly difficult situations. As the challenges presented to self-directed learners increase in quantity and difficulty over time, so too does the perseverance of these students.

It is the very vision of our school 'to develop life-ready students who learn how to learn, and achieve.' Our aim is that graduates from our school can utilise and develop their initiative, making them more self-sufficient and able to approach and solve tasks by themselves. This, in turn, develops their leadership skills, as they start to automatically look to *themselves* for answers and

“In today’s changed world resilience is vital for success and extends well beyond simply being ‘career-ready’ or ‘work-ready’. It makes our students genuinely ‘life-ready’.”

solutions, as opposed to someone else. Another key skill that results from self-directed learning is accountability. Those who form solutions to their problems themselves instead of taking direction from others are responsible for the outcome of their decisions. This responsibility naturally develops accountability in these learners as they experience first-hand the positives and negatives which arise from their respective successes and failures. Importantly, the skills laid out above all combine to make an individual more resilient. In today's changed world resilience is vital for success and extends well beyond simply being 'career-ready' or 'work-ready'. It makes our students genuinely 'life-ready'; able to see and lead with integrity through challenges of the future.

OneSchool Global is one of the world's largest and most comprehensive, truly global schools. With over 9,500 students in primary and secondary, over 120 campuses, 2,000 staff and volunteers operating across 20 countries, we teach within a vast array of curriculum jurisdictions and regional legislation. What remains consistent is our vision. For this reason, the key philosophy behind our approach is that *it's not what we teach, it's how we teach it*. Our pedagogy and routines for self-directed learning have evolved and been refined over many years into our 'Learning to Learn Framework'.

A critical part of developing students as self-directed, resilient learners is the way teachers and students talk about their learning journey. We make use of a specific language of learning that instils the right mindset in students. Our language of learning encompasses three inter-related action-focused concepts. These are known as *Orientate*, *Navigate*, and *Explore* among our staff and students, and are used to simplify the learning process into three simple steps that directly resonate with everyday life.

The focus on *Orientate* encourages students to make connections between topics and to understand the significance of the different relationships between such connections. The learning behaviours encouraged in this stage include defining, labelling, describing, and identifying, and form the foundation of learning about a certain concept or idea. The focus on *Navigate* encourages students to show understanding of more complex learning relationships. The learning behaviours encouraged in this stage include analysing, relating, distinguishing, contrasting, arguing, and identifying cause

and effect. In the *Explore* learning stage, students apply their newly discovered learning connections to wider contexts and new applications. In this stage, students' learning behaviours include creating, theorising, hypothesising, persuading, inventing, negotiating, and explaining cause and effect. In all real-life situations, it is necessary to first gain one's bearings, then to understand the context of the scenario they find themselves in and finally to act, moving forward by making use of the information available.

Complementing our three learning concepts is our emphasis on the learning journey through the 'Learning Pit' metaphor (Created by Nottingham, 2007, 2010, 2017), which brings this journey to life by visually representing how the learning process unfolds. Once students have orientated, there is a difficult descent into the pit where students do not know what to do. Then, when in the pit, students are encouraged to acknowledge they are stuck and to then make use of their backpack to figure out how to *Navigate*; to resolve the problem at hand and climb out of the pit. The backpack is a key tool for our learners. We ask students to consider what resources they have in it which they can use to solve the problems they encounter during the learning journey. The contents of the backpack include people, such as their peers, skills they have learnt at school and resources such as books and technology. The ascent out of the pit represents the successful learning that has taken place.

One of the fundamental outcomes of the Learning Pit concept is that it teaches students what to do when they do not know what to do. This may sound paradoxical, but it is an essential skill in the twenty-first century workplace. We often get feedback from employers emphasising the value of the skills which can be developed from a more self-directed approach to learning, such as taking ownership, teamwork, and self-discipline. Employers will not always be on hand to shepherd staff through different processes, and it is vital that employees can develop the confidence to tackle issues by themselves so that they can learn from their mistakes and build up their skillset. This is how students learn, and it is also how employees learn.

The role of our teachers and consistency of their own understanding of our pedagogy has been vital, coupled with our extensive use of technology. Planning a sequence of learning that embeds routines and skills for self-direction, and powerful



A OneSchool Global UK campus

dialogue with students about their learning journey, requires our staff to be highly proficient and consistent at those things. Five years ago, we set up a Teacher Academy in each of our global regions. Now, all of our new and current education and support staff follow a tailored, enquiry-led, pathway to help them learn, apply and refine our pedagogy.

“A critical part of developing students as self-directed, resilient learners is the way teachers and students talk about their learning journey.”

We believe that our approach to educational pedagogy has been conducive to creating self-directed, resilient learners since well before the pandemic started, and that COVID-19 has simply driven home its importance in the long term. However, there is no 'one size fits all' approach. Before implementing our learning frameworks, we undertook research involving a team of educators and leaders and refined this over a number of years to ensure it fits our staff, students, and culture. I would encourage school leaders to create and utilise a tailored educational framework that will help their students to become more resilient so they can face the burgeoning challenges of the twenty-first century. Students who can rise up against this uncertainty and doubt will be those who thrive in the workplace and beyond.

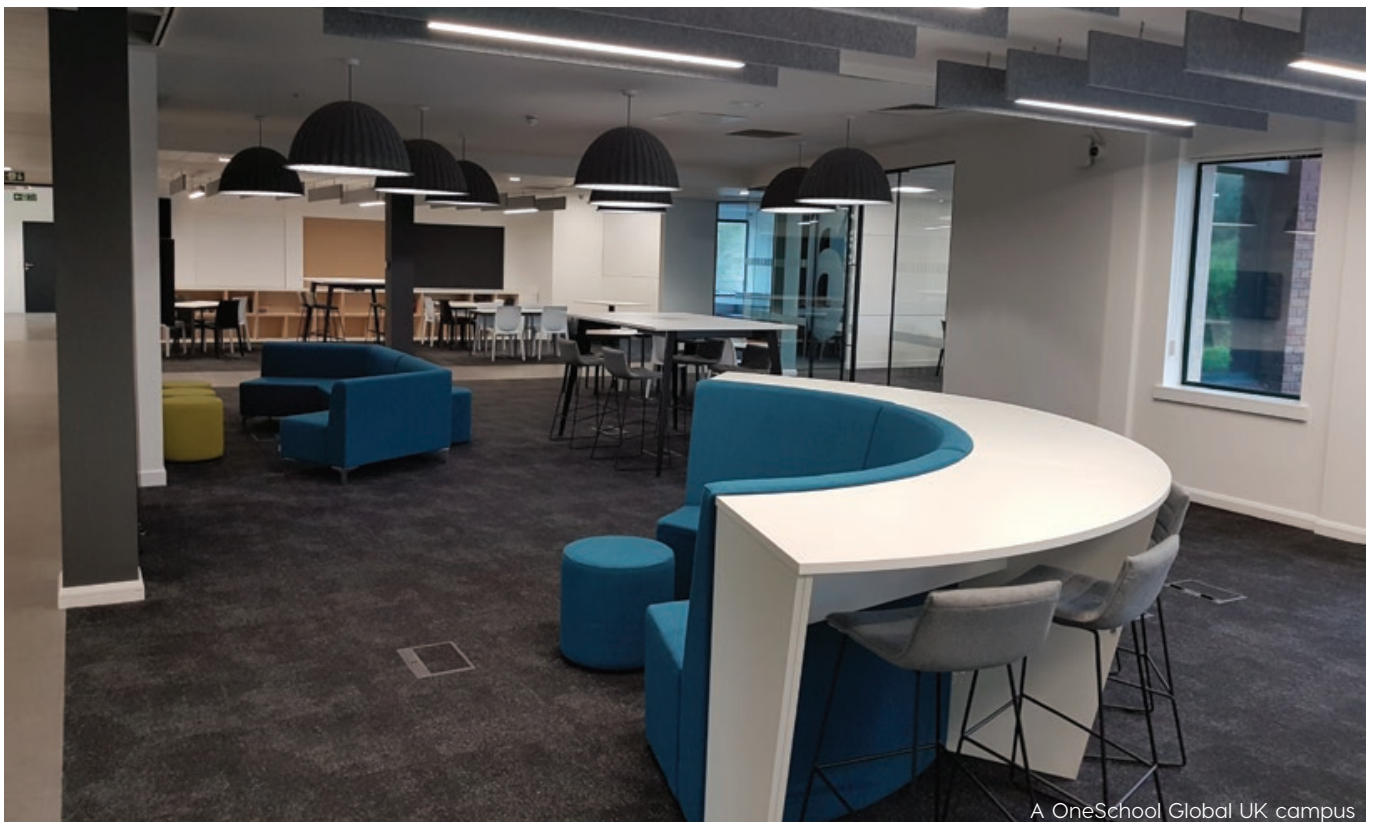


Matt Phillips has been a Regional Principal at OneSchool Global UK for just under five years and has recently been promoted to Global Director of Education, with oversight of Teaching and Learning across 120 Campuses globally. Before he joined OneSchool Global Matt was Executive Head Teacher across a group of independent specialist schools.

Having also served as a Senior Leader in the Comprehensive and Selective Grammar School sector, Matt has built up a broad experience of school systems and contexts.

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# Digital Signage *Inspiration*

from Bristol Grammar



At TrilbyTV, we are dedicated to visiting our education customers to see how they are using digital signage to create a sense of community and to enhance engagement. Bristol Grammar School is a great example of this, which is why I took the time to visit them to see how this leading independent school is using their screens to embrace and share in whole school communication.

Upon walking into the grand entrance of the reception, straight away I was greeted by a screen showcasing the day-to-day life in school along with some recent events. A parent was sat looking at the display and whilst I was admiring the setup, they asked, "Do you do this?"; "Yes," I replied with a smile. We had a discussion about how TrilbyTV worked and the parent thanked me for the amazing work we do. It's awesome to see how our platform, mixed with great content, not only engages the students and teachers, but parents as well.

After this fantastic interaction, I had a second greeting from Matt Nice, Director of ICT, who led me around the school. Matt explained "We started with a trial, and so many of the teachers and parents were really engaged with the system." TrilbyTV removes the need for IT departments to micromanage. This means less tech-savvy individuals can upload easily, giving ownership to staff and in some cases the pupils. Matt continued "TrilbyTV is now on all of the screens around the school and I'm working to get more people contributing and controlling it."

Bristol Grammar found TrilbyTV's unlimited screen subscription a cost-effective way to grow their digital signage estate. They now have a total of ten screens located in various different areas, the reception, hallways and stairwells. Matt explained the school's approach, "Having four main title slides that go on all screens throughout the school is really the way to do it. The idea is that they appear everywhere to maintain our branding and then individual departments will put up their own specific content mixed in-between. It helps add interest to the departments that don't have as much visual content."

As I walked around I could see all of the screens were working really effectively showcasing events, general school imagery and posing questions that really made you think. The more prominent areas included the Library screen, showcasing top picks books to read, the Sports Centre with some epic action shots of the rugby team and Geography department, showcasing field trips and also featuring the Ventusky weather App showing global weather data.

One space that really stood out was the Performing Arts Centre. The screen outside the theatre was working in perfect synergy with the space. It was situated above a beautifully laid out piano art installation. Sharing their own department branded purple slides added to the ambience of the department. They also were sharing contemporary theatrical listings, feeding the aspirations of the pupils on what may be yet to come.

Matt summarised, "It's encouraged teachers to put more and better quality content up. For us, TrilbyTV really ticks all the boxes."

It was a fantastic visit to Bristol Grammar School. Seeing how they are showing off their school to the max gave us some great ideas! With digital signage, it's down to having great software that helps the user to be creative and get the most out of their screens.



Neil Emery has had over 25 years experience in education and technology. As a technology trainer, he was fed up of walking into reception areas and seeing TV screens switched off. Neil now works with education settings nationwide helping them to develop effective digital signage strategies. Neil is happy to answer questions via [neil@trilbytv.co.uk](mailto:neil@trilbytv.co.uk)



Adcote School (M)

DIANE BROWNE

## CLEAR learning: whole child education

When I ask girls what they want to be when they grow up, they always say, “I want to be a vet/doctor/actress/etc.” Not one of them says “I want to be happy” and yet isn’t that, in fact, our ultimate goal in life?

Obviously, we should pursue something in life that fulfils us and therefore makes us happy. However, without some key personality traits, success and *lasting* happiness might be elusive as we journey through life. This is why all schools are keen to communicate to prospective parents that they will build the character their child will need for success in their adult lives.

However, when asked what “whole child education” actually means, details schools give can be quite vague. Exactly what parts of the whole child do you educate? How specifically do you do it? To try to be all things to all people is too woolly, with outcomes almost impossible to measure.

At Adcote, we wanted to avoid such imprecision. Capitalising on our status as an all-girls’ school, using our understanding of what women will need to combat challenge and meet success, we refined our character-building programme down to five critical areas: confidence, leadership, engagement, achievement and resilience. Resilience, the theme of this edition of the ISA Journal, is just one of these five important areas. It is just a coincidence that they form an acronym and their position in the acronym is not an indication of their priority of importance. Except perhaps the first word.

### Confidence

A common trait in girls is a lack of confidence, especially once they reach puberty. Women are often plagued by self-doubt, even when success is achieved, with “imposter syndrome” being a common barrier to further progress. Our educational programmes and our pastoral system were all evaluated and adjusted so that everything we do is designed to instil confidence in our girls by nurturing self-belief, and checking that confidence does not grow to be arrogance or recklessness.

### Leadership

Leadership skills can be learned. Women, naturally disposed to be carers and pleasers, can have a “no, no, after you” attitude which can dampen assertiveness. We teach our girls that, listening to others, empowering them while working towards a collective goal is great leadership and can play to their strengths. But you must also be able to stand firm, give directions, take responsibility at all times and hold people to account when needed, and we teach them that too.

### Engagement

Engagement comes in many forms. We have a no mobile phones policy during the school day to encourage girls to engage with each other. Our lessons are designed so that girls are actively engaged with their learning. We also have measures to make sure that girls engage with the local community and indeed engage with national and international issues, including processes to fund raise.

“We articulate explicitly the CLEAR values when girls are taking part in an activity, so they have a conscious understanding in the girls of the skills they are growing: “Well done, this is really building your confidence.” “Good, you’re showing real resilience, keep going.”



## Achievement

We are open with the girls that, in part, the A in achievement stands for exam success. We live in the real world and would be doing them a disservice if we told them that good examination results did not matter. We have overhauled our curriculum to deliver more success in examination results and we are now the top value-added school in Shropshire. However, we also point out that achievement comes in many forms, including conquering something that has been a previous difficulty. We also teach girls the exhilaration of winning in a competitive arena, especially in national competitions.

## Resilience

We teach the girls that without this, the other key skills will struggle to be attained and have strategies in place throughout the school to make sure that in the face of challenge, they “bounce”, not “break”, being very open with them that life will not always be a “primrose path”.

In delivering the CLEAR learning programme, we make use of the same aspects of the curriculum that exist in many schools (for example sport, music, drama). However, we articulate explicitly the CLEAR values when girls are taking part in an activity, so they have a conscious understanding in the girls of the skills they are growing: “Well done, this is really building your confidence.” “Good, you’re showing real resilience, keep going.”

CLEAR certificates are awarded in assembly to celebrate girls who have shown real strength in a particular area.

We did have to make some adjustments to our curriculum to deliver the programme efficiently to all age groups. For example, to develop leadership skills in older girls we deliver the Chartered Management Institute Level 3 Award in Leadership and Management.

Other adjustments were made too but the initiative that has had the most success and popularity with our students of all ages has been the introduction of our Challenge Days.

Challenge Days happen every term. The timetable is collapsed for the day and a comprehensive schedule of activities is organised. The tasks set are wide ranging and unusual to deliberately place the girls in situations they would not usually experience. All girls take part in all activities, but no girl is made to do what she cannot bear. Follow-up steps are taken, however, when this happens and strategies to build resilience are implemented through each girl’s personal tutor.

Activities take place in mixed age groups in order to encourage collegiality but also so that younger students can learn from older students. Following evaluation, we evolved the groupings so that teams were House based as this gave a competitive edge to assignments which encouraged more leadership from the girls.

“We are really beginning to see its impact on the development of our young students.”

Cross-phase collaboration is encouraged but some activities are designed for younger or older students only. For example, an activity where girls had to build a Lego structure following instructions from a diagram communicated to them via walkie talkie from another group in a different classroom was for Prep School girls only. Some activities requiring the strength and agility of more mature frames are for older students only, for example, a tyre tower construction.



Adcote School (M)



The tasks are designed to be enjoyable but demanding as students should extend their skills. Some activities are created with particular girls in mind to build confidence in them in facing down specific anxieties. For example, an animal expert was employed to tackle some girls' fears of spiders and snakes. Also, we had two students with a particular loathing of heights so a tree climbing activity using ropes and safety harnesses was arranged (both girls succeeded even though it took one of them 20 minutes to gather the courage to climb to the first stage).

All assignments are designed to address at least one element of the CLEAR learning programme. For example, orienteering activities develop resilience, escape rooms foster confidence, engagement and leadership. Success engenders the exhilaration of achievement.

Several activities test mental agility, holding nerve under pressure. For example, a "bomb disposal" mission (a computer designed activity against the clock) required clues to be solved to deactivate the device, or a "minefield" activity where items had to be retrieved without triggering a "mine".

Challenge Days also contain activities which deliver career ideas. We have worked closely with the Army who provided an assault course with coaching on how it should be completed and the RAF who sent a helicopter with a female team who explained the mechanics of the machine where girls were able to "operate" key elements before going into a flight simulator to attempt to land an aircraft.

Girls who enjoy sport and physical activity tend to relish these types of activity. To challenge them, therefore, there are other activities they might not find so comfortable. For example, in one activity, one team was required to write a book in a morning and another team had to create a marketing campaign for it in the afternoon, whilst another team turned it into a play script.

Girls love our Challenge Days, though they approach them with some trepidation, just as we would wish, and speculation about their content begins long before the days themselves. During lockdown when our lessons were delivered remotely, we still managed to hold a Virtual Challenge Day with activities adapted to be completed in girls' own homes, including those overseas. Tasks were still completed in House teams and were enthusiastically enjoyed, with the whole school eagerly joining together online at the end to reveal the final points allocations.

Whilst the girls love these days, pure enjoyment of them is not their purpose and our students know that. The days are pivotal in securing substantial and lasting personal development in all

our students, providing experiences that deliver transferable skills. Enthusiastic testimonials from our parents provide evidence that our systems are having an extremely positive impact.

We are so proud of our CLEAR learning programme and, as it has been running for a couple of years now, we are really beginning to see its impact on the development of our young students. We have many examples where we could cite our CLEAR learning making a difference to girls, but perhaps my favourite was a quote from a girl in Year 4 on the way home from a screening of "A Dog's Way Home" at the cinema. Most of the students cried heartily at the film, and she said, "The best thing about that film was the dog showed real resilience in getting back home!"



Diane Browne began her teaching career in an 11-16 comprehensive school in Lancashire before heading south to teach in a selective all-girls' grammar school in Stroud. Wishing to remain in a single-sex environment, Diane then moved to be Head of English at Westonbirt School before becoming part of the Senior Leadership Team as Director of Studies.

Since moving to Adcote School as Headmistress in 2016, the school has won national awards, including recently becoming ISA Senior School of the Year, and the top value-added school in Shropshire for A levels.

[www.adcoteschool.co.uk](http://www.adcoteschool.co.uk)



MATTHEW WRIGHT

## Growing resilient with green energy

Tackling climate change is perhaps the most important challenge of our time, but how can complex organisations like schools do their part? Here, ISA Gold Supplier Utilities 4 Less shares three recommendations to help schools reduce their costs with a greener energy strategy.

With the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP26 taking place in Glasgow this year and Greta Thunberg still a voice for the younger generation, many schools are considering what they can do for the environment.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, some may be hesitant to take climate action for financial reasons. However, it is possible to both reduce costs and become more sustainable with a combination of renewable energy and efficiency solutions.

There are a number of advantages to taking your energy usage in a greener direction. Not only does it help the planet we live on, but the environment is also a key issue among students: in a recent study, 88% of young people said they feel responsible for tackling climate change (UNICEF, EU, AU 2021).

In other words: improving and promoting your green credentials can help your school stand out when prospective students are considering their options. It can also be a great learning opportunity and topic of discussion in the classroom.

Furthermore, reducing your energy costs allows you to redirect important funds towards students and teachers – a key consideration in these uncertain times.

### Here are three steps to get you started:

- **Review your gas and electricity contracts**  
Some energy suppliers now offer 100% renewable energy as well as carbon offsetting solutions. Securing a long-term contract with a green energy supplier means you can expect stable energy prices without large price hikes.
- **Implement more efficient solutions**  
Replacing ageing lighting and heating systems with modern solutions helps you use less energy overall and reduces your bills as a result. Something as simple as replacing halogen bulbs with LEDs offers an average energy reduction of 80%. There are also more comprehensive energy-saving solutions available with a 1-year ROI on average.

- **Install an energy management system**  
We all know that knowledge is power. An energy management system works on your mobile, tablet or PC and lets you know how energy is used across your organisation in real time. It can automate processes like turning off lights and helps you identify areas of wastage and opportunities for further reductions.

The government has set a net zero target for 2050, but many schools are already working to get ahead and start reducing their environmental impact now. With relatively simple changes, we really can make a world of difference.



Matthew Wright is an Associate Partner at ISA Gold Supplier Utilities 4 Less. He is an experienced energy consultant specialising in renewable energy sourcing, usage reduction technologies and carbon offsetting. After spending years in the hospitality industry, his focus is now on helping similarly complex and energy-intensive organisations within the healthcare and education sectors.  
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# ISA Professional Development

ISA's training promotes excellence in independent education and helps schools to keep up to date with the latest best practice.

Our online day courses take place via Zoom and offer a mixture of expert advice and networking opportunities.

## how to book

Online training is offered at the affordable rate of £120 per delegate.

For more programme information and to book, visit the website at [www.isaschools.org.uk/events](http://www.isaschools.org.uk/events)

## Learning

### BOOSTING PSED THROUGH MOVEMENT

26 May | Online via Zoom | 9.00am – 2.30pm

**Who should attend?** EYFS, NQTs, EY, Nannies, Childminders, Reception Teachers, Sports and PE Leads, SLT

#### Programme outline:

- How music and movement supports all areas of wellbeing
- Developing secure attachment through movement interaction
- What does practitioner wellbeing look like?
- What does a child's wellbeing look like?
- Ways to adapt the environment to support PA
- Reflection on practice

### OUTSTANDING ISI PUPIL OUTCOMES FOR ALL PUPILS

27 May | Online via Zoom | 9.00am – 2.30pm

**Who should attend?** School Leaders and Class Teachers in both Primary and Secondary Schools, looking to improve pupils outcomes.

#### Programme outline:

- Understanding Outstanding Teaching and the ISI Criteria
- Improving pupils' academic and other achievements
- Improving pupils' personal development
- Reflections and planning for the future

## Leadership

### CREATING AN EFFECTIVE COACHING CULTURE

16 June | Online via Zoom | 9.00am – 2.30pm

**Who should attend?** Proprietors, Headteachers, Senior Leaders, Heads of Department, Heads of Year/ Key Stage, and any colleague who regularly observes other teachers' lessons and wants to provide feedback.

#### Course Aims:

- Coaching and its potential benefits to people, professionals, and organisations
- Research on the impact of coaching on professional development and personal performance
- How coaching conversations work, and how they differ from other kinds of 1-2-1 conversations
- The GROW Model and how it works best to grow colleagues
- Effective coaching conversations
- Coaching starting points and key phrases
- Knowing which questions to ask, and how to listen to the answers
- Proven, practical strategies for teachers, managers, and leaders

## Mental Health

### PUPIL RESILIENCE: DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS

22 June | Online via Zoom | 9.00am – 2.30pm

**Who should attend?** Anyone working in schools who is invested in the wellbeing of their students and is passionate about helping them develop emotional and psychological wellbeing and resilience.

**Programme outline:**

- What is health and wellbeing and how we can influence it?
- What is stress and how can we manage it?
- What is resilience and how do we build it?
- Resources and strategies to promote pupil wellbeing and resilience

## SENCO

### SENCO TRAINING – FOR THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR SEND PROVISION

23 June | Online via Zoom | 9.00am – 2.30pm

**Who should attend?** Anyone who is responsible for SEND provision in an independent school

**Programme outline:**

- The SEND journey in this country and abroad
- The SENCO's burden and how it may be adjusted
- Getting support from teachers
- Supporting the teachers leading to whole school provision, subject by subject
- The new normal? Operating under current restrictions
- EHCPs
- Inspection matters

# Professional Development for 2021/22

We are in the process of organising our Professional Development Programme for 2021/22 and below you can see some of the training we have on offer. Keep an eye on our website for more updates.

## GDPR MASTERCLASS FOR SCHOOL DATA PROTECTION LEADS

22 September | Online | 9.00am - 2.30pm

## BUILDING RESILIENCE IN OUR PRIMARY LEARNERS

23 September | Online | 9.00am - 2.30pm

## MIDDLE LEADERS – ACHIEVING EXCELLENT TEACHING AND LEARNING

28 September | Online | 9.00am - 2.30pm

## HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE SENIOR LEADER

7 October | Online | 9.00am - 2.30pm

## HOW TO MAKE LESSON OBSERVATIONS MEANINGFUL

20 October | ISA House, near Cambridge | 10.00am - 3.30pm



Credit Hope House Press

RHIANNON CUTLER

## Financial resilience

Schools have always needed to be financially aware but worrying about the financial resilience of their business model was for many schools not their top priority. This began to change during the 2008 recession, when the presumption by some that most parents would pay (and would be able to pay) whatever fee rise the school proposed, came under significant challenge for the first time.

It is all too easy to forget now, but the 2008 recession marked a real change in the way schools referred to and acknowledged themselves as businesses. Before this, pupil numbers were static (or growing); parents simply paid more (through fee extras) if they wanted more, and the financial pressure of fees rested in most cases on one parent only. Post-recession, schools continued to put fees up by 4% or more for many years, at a time when parental earnings were flatlining. This symbolised the first sounding of the “financial resilience warning bell”, and even then, things quickly seemed to settle back down.

Now fast-forward a decade and the sector has had to face, in only the last two or three years, some major financial pressures. These have cumulatively forced them to no longer see themselves as “financially resilient” just for surviving; more families than ever now have two parents working to afford fees, which means they need, rather than want, more “bang for their buck” without the extra fees. Combine this pressure on schools with the enormous TPS contribution hikes which took place almost overnight (and are not a one-off hit) and financial resilience starts to take on a different meaning. Schools are being forced to compete harder than ever before with bigger pressures on their financial resources than they have ever had.

“So how can a school know if its business model is financially resilient?”

Together with the added pressure of COVID-19, the sector is now forced to ask (and answer) the inevitable question “is financial resilience proved by being able to survive these threats and pressures? Or should each school have had a business model which was resilient to such pressures in the first place?”

### Is COVID a test of financial resilience?

It would be easy to assume that schools have shown undoubted “financial resilience” in the face of such an unprecedented challenge as COVID presented; schools had to focus afresh on their finances and respond quickly to the crisis through fee reductions, furloughing of staff, additional costs of the adjustment and curtailing capital programmes. Given this focus it would be easy to assume that not only was COVID a test of a school’s financial resilience, but that, if a school has “survived” COVID, then it must per se be financially resilient. But is this actually true?

I suggest the best way of thinking about COVID is that it has simply tested one element of a school’s finances; its cash flow management. In reality, the huge cost to schools of blanket fee remissions, which would have put most schools into deficit had they also had to continue to fully pay their staff, was just about avoided by the government’s furlough scheme and cost savings made by schools as a result of changing their offerings in line with lockdown restrictions. Whilst there was clear disruption caused both logistically and financially by the pandemic to all schools, there is a clear difference between a school surviving the disruption and a school having been financially resilient to the disruption. Even the forced deferral of capital projects



Element5 Digital

“The key is to *know*; *knowing* will provide governing boards with a clear view as to how secure their pupil numbers (and so their school’s fee income) are in the medium term.”

(which has been many schools’ immediate response) has not really tested actual financial resilience.

So how can a school know if its business model is financially resilient? And by this I mean proactively rather than reactively so? It comes down to three things – firstly knowing who your parents are, what they value about your offering and whether enough of them can afford to pay you to provide this to them. Secondly, having a vision about your educational offering which achieves this in an efficient way by doing more of the things which are valued and less of the things which are not. Finally, aligning your pay systems to reward those individuals who contribute the most towards your fulfilment of vision and offering, and holding back rewards from those who do not, or encouraging them to move on.

### Knowing your parents and what they value

Not enough schools really know about their parents and potential parents – why they chose the school in the first place, how they afford to pay the fees, how much of their incomes are used up in doing so, what they now value about the school and what they are less concerned about. So the first step in establishing financial resilience is by obtaining information about this through targeted surveys, rather than through all-too-common “blanket” ones. For example, you may want to know specifically about leavers and joiners in years 11 and 12, or new year 7s, or who attends your nursery and whether they stay on after year 2, or the hindsight-views of leaver pupils, or why some parents do or don’t send siblings to the same school. You may also be interested in fee affordability and wish to conduct an anonymised survey to find this out – many families were able to pay fees from the earnings of one parent prior to 2008, but now in most cases both parents have to work full-time to afford to do so. This has significant implications for the length of the working day, Saturday school, holiday activities and flexi-boarding. It also means that great care needs to be taken with above earnings-inflation fee rises. This matters more to some schools than others, but the key is to know; knowing will provide governing boards with a clear view as to how secure their pupil numbers (and so their school’s fee income) are in the medium term. This establishes the “top line”.

### Developing a vision and rationalising the offering to fit it

Armed with this knowledge, school boards need to develop a vision for their school which aligns with what their parents are wanting and can afford, and in doing so challenge their educational offerings more robustly than they might have in the past. This is especially so in any consideration of what constitutes “value for money”. This has often been viewed by schools as simply an internal exercise, but in the new economic affordability climate it is important to remember that “value for money” at your school nearly always needs to be compared externally, and not only against the value for money offered by the independent school down the road, but the “value for no money” state schools alternative.

For many schools the presumption has been that a wider breadth of curriculum, unconstrained subject options, free wraparound care, providing a low pupil-teacher ratio, offering both A level and IB, an ever-expanding co-curricular offering or yet another new facility is always good, and not to provide this is to risk “falling behind” or to miss out on one more “bum on seat”. But can this continue to be right? We have been carrying out many teacher workload projects over the last few years, analysing and costing the time deployment of teachers across the academic, co-curricular and ancillary programmes offered by client schools, and the costs are regularly frightening. So is your A level breadth truly necessary or valued, when for example the annual cost per pupil taking Latin is actually using up by itself that pupil’s entire fees for one term? Or is it right to be using your top head of maths to organise and run the squash club which has 5 pupils attend it each week? Or for the school to provide your best chemist with an extra period of times remission to run the debating club? Clearly if Latin, squash or debating is a key part of what parents value then the answer might well be “yes”, but if not? More choice is not always good, when measured both

against the actual cost and the diversion of resources (especially tired teachers!) that it can represent.

### Rewarding in ways which link to the vision and offering

The third aspect of achieving financial resilience is to make sure that your school’s pay and benefit systems are geared to reward those individuals who contribute most towards the key aspects of your educational offering, and so towards your vision being achieved, and to provide fewer rewards to those who do not, or encourage them to move on elsewhere.

It is important to realise that I am not advocating performance-related pay. Most teachers have not gone into teaching simply for the financial reward and using commercial-world pay tools not only does not work well as a motivator in schools, but can end by being divisive, pitting individuals and departments against each other. This can be a huge problem when much of school life is built around fairness, collegiality and goodwill.

But on the other hand, rewarding individuals (especially teachers) based solely on length of service, with pay increasing year-on-year simply for surviving school life for another year, or on so short a pay scale that teachers can reach the top by age 30 or 35 and then have nowhere else to go financially except by taking on additional management roles (and often giving up some of what they went into teaching to do!) seems quite wrong, especially as this fails also to reward your truly exceptional teachers. We have worked with many schools to change this over the last few years and to reward based not on performance (i.e. exam results etc.) but on input and contribution, measured against the school’s vision, offering and values. Doing so allows scarce pay resources to be directed in ways which fit with the future, not the past.

So, what is financial resilience? It’s having parents, vision, offering and rewards aligned with each other, in a way which brings all stakeholders together. Or even more simply, it’s the consequence of getting your strategic ducks in a row, knowing that the pond will still be there.



Rhiannon Cutler is the MD of Baines Cutler, a consultancy business specialising in carrying out surveys, consultancy and advisory work for independent schools. Their surveys provide the most authoritative information available today in the areas of school finances, teacher and senior staff salaries, benefits and workload and fee affordability. Their surveys, research, data and experience provide unique insights, making them leading advisors in their chosen areas, and putting them in the best position to help clients understand and improve the effectiveness of their schools as businesses. <http://www.bcsconsultants.co.uk/>

# Leicester Prep see up to *with switch to apetito*



When Leicester Preparatory School undertook a review of its school meals provision, it never expected to be able to return between 12% - 15% savings on its meals service, whilst now guaranteeing consistency, continuity and availability of superb quality meals.

The reason it undertook the review in the first place was all around quality to ensure that consistency, and breadth of meals fitted its needs, alongside a desire to take back control of its costs. As all school catering teams will know – there have been challenges in guaranteeing consistency of ingredients and meeting any special needs over this extraordinary year, where prices and supply issues have seen some significant fluctuations.

According to Head, Claudette Salmon, the school is enormously proud of its diversity framework, with 60 pupils from many different cultures aged 3 - 11. The school only serves Halal meals as part of this make-up. She says:

“We undertook a review of our catering as we wanted to take back control and ensure we were offering the right quality meals to meet our pupils needs, and at the right cost to the school.

“apetito was a name on our list and we reached out to the team to establish the benefits of a partnership, how they could help and also look at the quality of their meals first-hand.

“This led to a live tasting (socially distanced of course) and both Karen Robertson, our head bursar, and I were enormously impressed with the quality of the meals. Until this tasting,

I have to confess to a slight concern around the fact that meals were delivered frozen, but this concern was completely dispelled. The meals are delicious, and you would think they had been cooked from scratch that morning.

“For us – the journey to make was quite complex. We take our stakeholders opinions very seriously too and we wanted to ensure everyone was on board across our trustees, proprietors, an external consultant who was also on board, and importantly, our pupils and their parents.

“The first step in making change was to present our proposed change and meals to our proprietors and consultants. apetito hosted a second tasting for our stakeholders which captured their imagination – they loved the food and service proposition which meant we were no longer reliant on fluctuating elements that were out of our control. In fact, this second tasting was so successful that these key stakeholders wanted to make the change immediately!”

Ross Waite of apetito’s Independent Schools Division picks up the story:

“An important part of the decision making process was the cost implication of making change. Would there be an impact around cost to move services – would it be more expensive to move to a reliable, consistent meals provision of high quality. In the event, everyone was delighted to find that the opposite prevailed. There was an all-round saving to be made of between 12 – 15% on the previous service – a not insignificant sum.

*Get in touch* to see how much your school could save with apetito!





# 15% savings



“Our next step was to ensure that parents and pupils were on board. Not an easy feat with Covid playing its role in lockdown which mean we could not invite parents and pupils to come and try our meals directly to discuss the new service and give their views. However, we did find a solution....

“Alongside the School’s own team, we sent out menu’s on Microsoft forms to all parents and invited them to be part of the decision making process.. We then used the school’s own kitchens to cook a range of meals, and then ‘hot-boxed’ these to families at their home address. It was amazing, and we had such great feedback and appreciation of the service from parents and children alike”.

Claudette confirmed that the service has gone live with effect from early March – not easy under Covid.

“There were some challenges along the way in terms of the logistics of making change under Covid. Not least, we needed to invest in a freezer (to store our meals) and a new oven in order to ensure meals could be served and cooked in the right way.

“Getting the equipment in a matter of days was potentially always going to be difficult but apetito worked closely with the oven supplier, who went way over the extra mile to ensure we could get everything in place. We were suddenly also left without a chef which added to the urgency of mobilising our new service at speed.

“However, it all came together and from day one has been seamless and has worked well. The cost saving is an unexpected, but very welcome, benefit.

The school is now entering it’s second month of installation of its new service and reports all is running smoothly:

“apetito has been an enormous support in elements such as menu planning. Ross and his team have designed menus for our Spring and Summer menu cycle, tailored directly to our needs – our new Summer menu will be ready for pupils to enjoy when they return on April 13th after the Easter break. Within the fabric of our pupils, we do have a small number who are dairy and egg intolerant, so we always make sure we have meals that are right for them. We do that by offering all pupils a choice of two meals - one of which is free-from those allergens. It couldn’t be easier.

“Feedback has been entirely positive. 100% terrific. We had a quote which summed up the change from one pupil who mentioned completely ‘off the cuff’:

“I thought I would miss the meat meals and need a packed lunch; however, the meat-free options taste great!”

**apetito**

WILTSHIRE

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FOODS



[www.apetito.co.uk/school-meal-services/](http://www.apetito.co.uk/school-meal-services/)



Danesfield Manor School (LW)

DEBORAH LEEK-BAILEY OBE

## The resilience within

*Sadly, there have been over 126,000 deaths linked to COVID-19 in the UK (at the time of writing). Deborah Leek-Bailey OBE, Global Leader and Head of UK Independent Schools for Education Development Trust and Education Advisor to Child Bereavement UK, shares with us how those within her network have helped bereaved children to develop resilience and coping strategies and advises on some practical resources for schools. Deborah also shares examples of resilience in school leadership during the pandemic.*

Whichever direction I look, in my virtual world, I feel inspired by people's optimism and resilience. Resilience is typically defined as the capacity to recover from difficult life events. None more so, than the past year.

Each of us knows how challenging the last 12 months have been for everyone but especially leaders of our school communities. Globally we have shared a sense of uncertainty, but operated within a paradigm shift, where we as teachers can only surmise how to eradicate a global pandemic, whilst hoping to survive it! Despite this uncertainty, we have continued to provide reassurance to parents and carers, staff and especially, pupils. This has been achieved through effective communication,

pastoral expertise, transparency, and a willingness to be innovative and flexible in our delivery of the curriculum. In turn I believe that our response has generated a deep sense of trust from most parents and induced community resilience: defined by the way in which groups of people respond to, and recover from, adverse situations, such as natural disasters, acts of violence, or economic hardship.

In times of danger our adrenalin usually increases to protect us in 'fight, or flight mode': sometimes from things that we cannot determine, we develop a heightened sense of awareness – and then there is calm. COVID-19 caused that reaction in many of us but led to a period of prolonged uncertainty. As the pandemic has lingered, the ability to reassure our pupils, friends and family has become increasingly challenging and yet we have managed to do so; we have dug deep and found our emotional resilience.

The 7 Cs resilience model was developed by paediatrician Ken Ginsburg, MD, to help children and adolescents build resilience. Learning competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control is how Ginsburg (2020) says we can build inner strength and utilise outside resources – regardless of age.



St Andrew's School (LS) painting with feet during Diversity Day

### Child Bereavement UK

As Education Advisor to Child Bereavement UK, I have been in awe of the charity's response to the pandemic and how the children and families they support have epitomised resilience. The charity uses another particular resilience model to underpin their work with children, based on three key characteristics 'I am - I have - and I can' (Grotberg in Barnard, Morland & Nagy, 1999: 58). Importantly, they are acknowledging loss, whilst also supporting young people to feel empowered, learn and evolve, in a similar way to how educationalists would apply the principles of Dweck's (2007) growth mindset model, which practitioners have continued to develop over the years.

Most of us have found simply following a routine to be challenging but imagine the additional demands for those children who have experienced unexpected bereavement and yet, with support, they miraculously continue to not only survive but adapt and flourish.

On average, 1 in 30 young people will be bereaved of a parent before the age of 16. Last March, the government predicted we might have to face the prospect of losing 20,000 people to the pandemic, but none of us could have imagined that the number of deaths linked to COVID-19 would exceed 126,000! Thankfully CBUK were able to provide more than 13,000 hours of one-to-one support to nearly 2,700 children, young people, and adults. They responded to nearly 8,000 enquiries from families and professionals to their Helpline and online Live Chat facility, and whilst doing so, they also managed to train 20,000 professionals, including headteachers, doctors, midwives, nurses, teachers, social workers, and emergency services staff, many free of charge by webinar.

### Supporting bereaved young people in schools

Alongside such phenomenal delivery CBUK has also created advice for schools, in many formats, to support bereaved young people, such as 'Managing bereavement: A guide for schools', which is a comprehensive resource that can be downloaded from the CBUK website.

The guide reminds us of the significant role that schools play in providing familiar stability to children during turbulent times. Some children may choose to share their worries, whilst others simply wish to remove themselves from the emotionally charged atmosphere of home and seek the normality of the classroom. As we know, grieving children and young people can display altered behaviours in different situations, which is why maintaining a strong contact with home is so vital. Having a named individual to liaise with the family provides continuity of information and avoids the family having to unnecessarily repeat things that could be painful to convey.

Most of you will hopefully have a Bereavement Policy in your school and know that monitoring and communication with the child are crucial. We all grieve in our own way and children are no different, so consulting with the family on what they require is important, as well as how the family would like the news to be shared amongst the school community.

**“It reminds us of the significant role that schools play in providing familiar stability to children during turbulent times.”**

It may be many months before a grieving child can fully cope with the pressures of school work again and this needs to be incorporated into whole school expectations of the child. Grief is not a linear process, and whilst we all go through most of the stages of anger, sadness, worry, guilt, regret, confusion, shock, loneliness, numbness, loss and resilience, children may step in and out of them, like puddles. Our role as educators is to be constantly vigilant and supportive and CBUK has many resources for schools supporting the grieving process. On the CBUK website you can find lists of suggested books for the school library. Two useful apps are The 'Grief: Support for young people', created by bereaved young people, for bereaved young people, and the game 'Apart of Me', both available on app stores.

### Resilience in school leadership during the pandemic

Research published in 2015 in the journal *Ecology and Society* by Sippel et al. showed that social systems that provide support in times of crisis or trauma support resilience in the individual. They further suggest that there is a bi directional relationship between systems level resilience and individual resilience. My personal view is that schools which have placed the individual child at their core and worked flexibly, in collaboration with the pupil's families, over a prolonged period, as well as appropriately challenging pupils through their school activities, have nurtured resilience and this has undoubtedly enabled the school community to operate more effectively in the current crisis. There is a symbiotic bond which exists between school and home and it has enabled each to reach out and remain strong, knowing they are not operating in isolation.

“As the pandemic has lingered, the ability to reassure our pupils, friends and family has become increasingly challenging and yet we have managed to do so; we have dug deep and found our emotional resilience.”

I have tremendous admiration for the ISA Heads with whom I work, at Education Development Trust (Ed Dev) and respect the way in which they have led their schools through this pandemic. They have remained positive in the face of adversity and supported their staff through the most challenging time of their careers. All of them have implemented wellbeing ‘Oasis’ rooms for the pupils. Ed Dev. upskilled their Mental Health First Aiders, across the organisation, including within the schools, providing significant support for the staff, enabling them to remain resilient, as school and family life have both been challenged. The Ed Dev. staff welfare group, of which I am a member, reflects the diverse nature of the organisation and has acted upon the outcomes of regular ‘Pulse’ surveys that staff have completed. Equally, recognising the enormity of pressure school leaders were under, we provided executive coaching for the Heads, and mentors for their school business managers, which I know they have found beneficial.

I have witnessed many exciting activities led by all the Headteachers, such as Jo Smith, of Danesfield Manor

School (LW), working alongside pupils in the 32-acre Forest School site, or former BBC employee and Head of Oakfield Preparatory School (LS), Moyra Thompson, with pupils and staff, operating their radio station, whilst younger pupils benefitted from pre-recorded storytelling from teachers, parent representatives and older pupils, taken with a treat and joined by their parents, or if keyworker children, the Oakfield staff. We all require ‘time out’ and resilient children still need relaxation and treats! St. Andrews, Rochester (LS), led by Emma Steinmann Gilbert, achieved 44th place in the top 100 schools Guide during the pandemic and her pupils regularly attain a significant share of the local 11+ results but Emma also comprehends the significance of caring for the individual and recently implemented a Whole School Diversity Day. The day started with Infant/Junior live assemblies and the children then participated in three live activity sessions including learning and writing in braille, dyslexia activities, sign language, painting with their feet and non-dominant hand etc. and finished the day with a video on autism assistance dogs, created by one of the staff members.



Oakfield Preparatory School (LS) keyworker children bedtime read

## Resilience includes being outward facing, solutions focused and inclusive

All the Ed dev schools participated in **Children's Mental Health Week**, acknowledging the enormous pressure that youngsters have experienced over the past year. Equally so have staff, and over the last six months the Heads and I have spent considerable time looking further at distributed and collaborative leadership. There is now weekly contact between them all, on a variety of levels. They have been wise enough to draw support from one another and to lead by example in encouraging their SENDCos, School Business Managers, DSLs and Directors of Studies, to do the same. The school leaders have demonstrated a resilient disposition, but they have also known when to seek advice and encouragement from the team around them, as well as extending their outreach to the communities they serve. This has included the ISA and we have had visiting ISA Heads join some of our meetings, such as the safeguarding ones focused on Bereavement.

*"Working with Deborah, and her EDT DSL group, on real life scenarios, helped re-build my faith in my own abilities but also highlighted the benefits of reaching outside my own school to see how others were dealing with similar situations."*

Emily Primrose Brown, Head of Holland House School (LN)

In these troubling times we remain resilient by pooling our resources, as well as learning from one another. Jo Smith, Head of Danesfield Manor recently shared her knowledge on mental wellbeing, at the 'Westminster Forum', chaired by Baroness Garden of Frognal, Vice Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Independent Education. Keen to be equally supportive to parents who were struggling, Moyra Thompson, Head of Oakfield, and her staff prepared a Booklet on home-based learning, to support families.

The 7 Cs model specifically addresses resilience building in pupils. It lists competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control as essential skills for young people to handle situations effectively. There is no universal formula for building resilience in young people, but I have no doubt that collectively we can continue to make the difference.



Deborah Leek-Bailey OBE is Global Leader and Head of UK Independent Schools for Education Development Trust and Education Advisor to Child Bereavement UK. She is a former headteacher and government advisor, and has advised ministers on multi stakeholder partnership engagement, which focused on raising aspirations, attainment, and social mobility, across sectors.

Deborah chaired the ministerial Independent State School Partnership Forum (ISSP) from 2013-2017 and was previously a National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) National Associate, National Chairman and Vice President of the ISA. She is also a former ISA Headteacher and advisor to the Government on social mobility and independent-state school partnerships.

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# Congratulations to our ISA Award 2020 Winners

After a challenging year for all, we were delighted to celebrate the successes of our Members' schools in February with the ISA Awards 2020, celebrated through our first ever virtual ceremony event.

The ISA Awards is an annual event that recognises the breadth of excellence and innovation across the independent sector, and the hard work of Headteachers and their staff. We would like to applaud all our finalists for their fantastic work, dedication and passion shown over 2020. And congratulations to our winners for their tremendous achievement.

**ISA Junior School of the Year Award**  
St Christopher's School, Epsom

**ISA Senior School of the Year Award**  
Adcote School for Girls

**ISA Award for Outstanding Sport  
in a Small School**  
St David's College

**ISA Award for Outstanding Sport  
in a Large School**  
LVS Ascot

**ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation  
in Performing Arts**  
Duke of Kent School

**ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation  
in Fine Arts**  
MPW College London

**ISA Award for Outstanding Provision  
for Learning Support**  
LVS Hassocks

**ISA Award for Outstanding Local  
Community Involvement**  
Leighton Park School

**ISA Award for Outstanding  
International Involvement**  
Essendene Lodge School

**ISA Award for Outstanding STEAM Provision**  
St Faith's Prep School

**ISA Award for Sustainability and  
Environmental Education**  
Kingsley School Bideford

**ISA Award for Excellence in Pupil  
Personal Development**  
Cardiff Sixth Form College

**ISA Award for Innovation in Pupil Voice**  
DLD College London

**ISA Award Marketing Initiative of the Year**  
Caversham Preparatory School



Duke of Kent School (LS): Excellence and Innovation in Performing Arts



LVS Ascot (LW): Outstanding Sport in a Large School

# ISA Awards 2021

**Entries are now open for the ISA Awards 2021!**

## Reasons to enter:

- Recognition of the Association and independent sector for your school's achievements
- Promote the high quality of your provision both to existing and prospective parents, and the wider community
- Celebrate your success at the Awards Ceremony
- Get featured in national and local publicity for your achievements
- Help to share your school's best practice

## This year's categories are:

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Early Years (*returning for 2021*)

ISA Junior School of the Year Award (ages 0-13)

ISA Senior School of the Year Award (ages 11-18)

ISA Award for Outstanding Sport (Small School - 1 class per year group)

ISA Award for Outstanding Sport (Large School - more than 1 class per year group)

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Performing Arts

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Fine Arts

ISA Award for Outstanding Provision for Learning Support

ISA Award for Outstanding Local Community Involvement

ISA Award for Outstanding International Involvement

ISA Award for Excellence in Pupil Personal Development

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Inclusion, Diversity and Equality (*new for 2021*)

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Mental Health and Wellbeing (*returning for 2021*)

We have taken on our Members' previous feedback, and this year, as well as our 3 finalist schools, judges will also be awarding 'highly commended' to up to 3 schools who do not make the shortlist, but whose work is deemed worthy of recognition for its excellence and innovation. This means even more schools are now in with a chance of being awarded for their outstanding provision!

**Entries are open until Friday 30 July 2021.**

To find out more information on the criteria and how to enter, visit our website:

**[www.isaschools.org.uk/isa-awards](http://www.isaschools.org.uk/isa-awards)**



The Pointer School (LS)

ADAM GREENWOOD

## Pathway to a doctorate – EdD

It could be said that I am a learning addict. Having already completed a couple of undergraduate degrees, a PGCE and an MBA, last year I decided to embark on the journey towards a doctorate. Then COVID hit and we had our third child, so it has been a busy year as a Head! Nothing has tested my resilience more than balancing a school in a time of COVID-19 alongside intensive study, however the gains from the course outweigh the sacrifices – from networking with fellow professionals to being deeply engaged in research.

### What is an EdD?

When I first embarked on the journey looking at doctorate study I was naturally looking for PhD programmes across the UK and beyond. It was not until I started to research further that I realised there is a whole host of doctorate degrees out there: not just the traditional PhD pathway. An EdD gives you the “Doctor” title at the end of the journey but is generally aimed at working professionals who want to conduct practical research in their own setting. EdDs had a brief moment of fame around Joe Biden’s inauguration when an outspoken journalist asked First Lady Dr Jill Biden if she would remove her Doctor title; she politely declined!

The structure of the programme varies slightly from university to university but at UCL IOE we have Friday and Saturday classes about once per month, within a cohort of 24 pupils. The cohort

is a diverse bunch with a mixture of heads, deputy heads and classroom teachers, with some aspiring academics and higher education teachers thrown in. People join the sessions from across the world, including Canada, the USA and China. The first year is the most intensive with four submissions totally 17,000 words. This is followed in the second year with a 20,000-word mini-project before embarking on your thesis of approximately 50,000 words. You have 4-7 years to complete the programme.

My research is practical on-the-job research focusing on headteacher motivation to avoid plateauing in-role: very relevant to all leaders! The application process takes up to a year and the most difficult stage is finding both a primary and a secondary supervisor at your institution willing to support you through your research journey. Academics talk about getting hundreds of requests a year for doctorate support and most only sponsor a handful. Having some prior links and attending networking events makes this a more straightforward process. Finding supervisors is coupled with writing up an initial research proposal (2,000 words) and is then followed by an interview with the programme leader.

Although classes have been online this year, and effective, nothing replaces being in person. Especially for those rich conversations amongst a group of people on different research journeys.



“Nothing has tested my resilience more than balancing a school in a time of COVID-19 alongside intensive study, however the gains from the course outweigh the sacrifices from networking with fellow professionals to being deeply engaged in research.”

## Resilience

Resilience has been thrown to the forefront of education over the past few years and we have all had our resilience levels tested over COVID-19. Having previously served in the Army on operations in Afghanistan I have had the BIG moments that test your resilience. However, the real challenge of being resilient is not how you react to the BIG moments; we often talked about acts of valour in the Army and felt that most people, in such an unfortunate situation, hoped they would react in the appropriate manner.

Instead, the real test of resilience is the day-to-day grind of life and the job. All in education will have faced the moments of questionable levels of motivation when they have hundreds of exam scripts to mark, hours of planning to complete or a long night of report writing ahead.

Doctorate study adds another layer to this. There is no doubt that there will be lots of evenings and holidays taken up with reading and writing to meet strict deadlines across the year.

After a long day in the office it can be a challenge to go home, put the kids to bed and then knuckle down to a couple of hours

of study. What is useful is that you can generally manage the course around the school holidays (deadlines are generally the first Monday back after a break). At the start of a term when things are very busy in school you can manage the doctorate with some light reading. Towards the end of the term, when things are hopefully a little less busy, you can get stuck into writing. There are times you would rather have an evening on the sofa, but if you can choose an area of study that you are deeply interested in you can usually avoid this. There is no doubt that family always has to be the top priority so studying has to fit around times when they are asleep.

In some respects doctorate study is like training for a marathon. There is a big goal at the end of it, but the reality is that lots of people are able to complete both. It is pretty unlikely (perhaps impossible) that you are going to run the world's fastest marathon or get a Nobel Prize for your studies; that can't be your sole motivation. To motivate yourself, you have got to enjoy the grind: putting one step in front of another and moving forward.

Breaking the challenge into small manageable steps: the journey towards the end is daunting if you look at the end without a breakdown of the steps along the way. I break my essays down into small bitesize chunks so that I have small goals in place.



The Pointer School (LS)

When it comes to even bigger projects such as a 50,000+ word thesis I measure on a spreadsheet the progress that needs to be made each week, with a small reward if I make it. On the whole it is a very personal challenge, you are not competing against anyone else: it is all about your own finish and your own journey. You have to be motivated by this to get through – whether you're talking about a marathon or a doctorate!

### Why do an EdD?

When I finished my Master's degree I had the best intentions of keeping up with academic reading and attending university conferences. With the best will in the world this went by the wayside amongst the day-to-day grind of running a school and having a family. Yet, the EdD encourages me to keep up with academia.

Increasingly, many heads have some form of Master's degree, whether a more traditional MA route or increasingly popular options such as MBAs so that you can build on your business experience for running a school. In some respects, I am doing the course because I want to learn more and be embedded in some deep research (that I hope will shape a small corner of our profession) and better myself. The other side is that I find it hard to believe I'll still have the endurance for Headship when I'm 60 so this gives me a future option into academia and consultancy.

If you are drawn to doctorate study for the title I think there are probably easier ways to add some letters before or after your name! If you are looking to enrich your educational perspective and add another dimension to your practice, I would really encourage you to look at an EdD. It is the ultimate academic challenge and will put your levels of resilience to the test in a way that, I believe, can make you a better leader and a more informed practitioner.



Adam Greenwood is Headmaster of The Pointer School in south London and a governor at Townley Grammar School. His current research focuses on the induction of headteachers into a new school and he'll be looking for some participants in the very near future! Twitter - @PointersHM



The Pointer School (LS)

# WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

## NEW MEMBERS

St Mary's Hare Park School	Ludovic Bernard	East
Odyssey House School	David Malachi	London North
Cranmore School	Barry Everitt	London South
Greenwich Steiner School	Adrian Dow	London South
Moon Hall School Reigate	Michelle Catterson	London South
Darul Uloom Dawatul Imaan	Abdurrahman Kayat	North
Abbot's Way School	Hellen Lush & Gareth Wright (Joint Heads)	South West
The Levels School	Caroline Cook	South West
Stonar School	Matthew Way	South West

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## TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Red Balloon Centre Norwich	Heather Jolly	East
Stoke College	Gareth Lloyd	East
Gateway School	Cath Bufton-Green	London North
The King's School Witney	Matthew Cripps	London North
Shoreham College	Sarah Bakhtiari	London South
Abbey College Malvern School	Daniel Booker	Midlands
Bosworth Independent College	Jason Lewis	Midlands
Handel House School	Mark Raisborough	Midlands
Highfields School	Sarah Lyons	Midlands
Jameah Girls Academy	Khadijah Gulamnabi	Midlands
The Old Vicarage School	Kerry Wise	Midlands
The Shrubbery School	Amanda Lees	Midlands
Huddersfield Grammar School	Donna Holmes	North
Maranatha Christian School	Tom Price	South West

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## SCHOOL ASSOCIATES

Fraser Halliwell  
Amit Obhrai  
Mandy Gilchrist

## LIFE ASSOCIATES

Chris Curl



Forest Preparatory School (N)

ROB HAWORTH

## Is there life after retirement?

The work of an educator and a Head can certainly challenge our resilience, while also being an incredibly rewarding experience. But, what happens next? Former Headteacher and ISA Life Associate, Rob Haworth, shares his own experiences as he explores the question: "Is there life after retirement?"

31 August 2014 was my last day in full-time employment. My long term plans had always been to retire after 40 years and I'd given the governors a full year's notice. In the medium term I was anxious to leave the school shipshape and Bristol fashion but I hadn't expected that this would mean working up to the very last minute. On 1 September 2014 I was no longer in employment and I realised my plans for retirement were largely hypothetical; nothing was set in stone. Not a problem.

After four weeks I was bored and desperate. I did try some hare-brained schemes; I successfully offered my services to a local estate agent to accompany house viewings. I bought a house in need of refurbishment with my lump sum and sold it 18 months later for a small profit...but neither of these gave me the satisfaction that I'd enjoyed in my career. I made a decision to

use the skills I thought I had as opposed to those I wish I had. In the late autumn of 2014 it dawned on me that I had retired out of a career that had served me magnificently and I had retired into precisely nothing. Planning for retirement had been largely financial, securing mine and my family's future, rewriting my will, even paying for my funeral, but I hadn't planned what was going to fill the gap.

Searching diligently I applied for work as a mentor with several charities...to no avail. I applied for positions as a senior school governor to two local authorities in East Yorkshire and heard nothing from either to encourage me. I was not wanted and I also found myself dealing with a plethora of health problems, by and large treatable but unimaginably debilitating; this in a man who had never missed a staff football or cricket match, who played competitive squash twice a week and went for a 3-mile run for fresh air. Here was the second revelation: I was not as young as I used to be...something I had to accept with reluctance.

Perhaps the final nail in the coffin was the realisation that I was no longer a part of the school – in all its manifestations – that I

*“Planning for retirement had been largely financial, securing mine and my family's future, rewriting my will, even paying for my funeral, but I hadn't planned what was going to fill the gap.”*

had come to know and love. I was invited, out of courtesy, to a number of events but I felt patronised – I wasn't – and like a fish out of water. I was the past...not the present and certainly not the future.

If you are a current or recently retired Head reading this and beginning to worry about your future, don't panic, and read on.

### Opportunities arise

Then, as the sun rose on a new year I was asked if I would consider the vacant governorship at a primary school in our village. Within weeks I was installed as the 'authority' governor on the Board of Hallgate Primary School; I am currently vice-chair. Meantime I applied through various national governor recruitment organisations and in 2016 I was invited to become a governor at one of the Yorkshire and The Humber Co-operative Learning Trust schools. I was thrown in at the deep end being elected chairman of the local governing body of St George's Primary School in the centre of Hull.

I have not only learned a huge amount about the maintained sector – much of which I thought I knew – but I have also come to appreciate the outstanding work that is done where class sizes are up to 30 and basic resources are at a premium. In both schools we are rightly proud of our improvement from Requires Improvement to Good in recent Ofsted inspections.

### Volunteering in the charity sector

In the spring of 2015 I was contacted by the Hull charity Refresh, which works with young people, aged 12-18, managing issues around drug and alcohol abuse. I had applied to be a mentor some months before but contact was delayed to coincide with the start of a new training programme. Following the training I became a mentor in the late summer. The mentorship involves one-to-one support and a mentor is expected to remain with a client for a maximum of one year. Almost inevitably there are difficult issues and it is accepted that a satisfactory conclusion may prove elusive. I have a patchy record; I have had reasonable success with two mentees, a total failure with one and with another I had to request to be relieved of duties after 15 months; the stress was having a negative effect on me and my ability to help the mentee.

By accident Refresh's offices are in a council building accommodating a number of local government services, including social services' Leaving Care, looking after young people approaching independence, including young refugees. My own 'boss', a fulltime employee of Refresh, was asked if he knew anyone who could help a refugee originally from Sudan with his English on a voluntary i.e. unpaid basis. Qualified EFL teachers usually require payment – understandably – but no funding was available. This young man was attending college but clearly struggling. I agreed to help and began regular lessons in a town centre café, which tolerated our two-hour weekly stay with a smile and a free cup of tea.

“What is most revealing is their generosity of energy, time and spirit; I have given of my time and knowledge, they have given of their hearts.”



Gateway School (LN)

Mohammed arrived in Hull 6 years ago in the back of a lorry from the Calais jungle. He arrived in Calais from Western Darfur via Tripoli, Bastia, Rome and Paris. He had fled home with his mother and younger brothers following the murder of his father and oldest brother. A perilous journey took them to Tripoli and he was separated from his family by virtue of his age. He crossed the Mediterranean on a glorified lilo and was picked up by the Red Cross mid passage; they saved his life. Teaching him English was a challenge. His only contact with his mother is through the Red Cross; she lives in a refugee camp in Chad with his younger brothers and any surplus money he has he sends to her. He leads a very frugal and pious life, is a young man of high moral principle and relishes hard work; sadly, his regular work as an apprentice in a day care home has been interrupted by the pandemic.

Two years ago Mohammed asked me if I would help a friend, who attended the same Hull mosque, with his English. My experience of teaching Mohammed encouraged me to do so. Bashir is from Khartoum, also a refugee with leave to stay, and arrived in Hull via a similar route. Bashir remains very cagey about his past but is in touch with his mother and his siblings in Khartoum. Bashir speaks, reads and writes Arabic fluently and successfully attended school passing GCSE equivalent qualifications in several subjects including English. My support of Bashir is not only linguistic, but has meant familiarising myself with further education opportunities in the area. Needless to say, they don't really cater for students with English as a second language wishing to pursue education in English in England.

My involvement with Mohammed and Bashir has been of immense value to me, not only learning about Muslims rather than just Islam, but also appreciating their values and ethos, coming from an unstable and dangerous homeland without rancour and being grateful for anything they are given. What is most revealing is their generosity of energy, time and spirit; I have given of my time and knowledge, they have given of their hearts. As things stand, they cannot return to Sudan safely.

I have also spent time agreeing to do practice interviews for pupils at my old school and that of my eldest offspring as they try to untangle the secrets of being offered a place to read medicine or a place at Oxbridge to read anything. I

have recently volunteered to act as regional coordinator for Lymphoma Action, although that is currently on hold for the duration of lockdown.

I am told I must learn to say no. However, if I have learned anything it is that there is life after retirement and that the opportunities to give of one's experience as a schoolteacher are legion. "It is better to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). But I have been given a hugely rewarding present and future.



Rob Haworth is a Cambridge-educated economist who retired in 2014 after 40 years in teaching, 23 of which as a Headmaster, first of Hull Grammar School and then, following a merger with Hull High School, of Hull Collegiate School. Rob is now an ISA Life Associate. He is married with three adult offsprings, all teachers. He remains a champion of the education, health and welfare of young people through a cornucopia of voluntary work in the education and charity sectors and is a lifelong gardener and Bolton Wanderers supporter.

## ISA Remote Learning Celebration

ISA Member schools have been providing excellence in remote learning since the beginning of the pandemic. With the ISA Remote Learning Celebration, we wanted to allow our schools to recognise teachers who have gone above and beyond. Well done to all who took part and thank you to all the schools for sharing their brilliant online lessons.

Congratulations to the winners, you can view the winning lessons on the ISA website [www.isaschools.org.uk](http://www.isaschools.org.uk)

### ARTS CATEGORY:

#### WINNER:

Thornton College - Year 11 Drama - *'Too Much Punch For Judy'*

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED:

The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's - *'Storytelling in Lockdown'*

#### HONOURABLE MENTIONS:

Southbank International School Hampstead - *'Grade 1 Reflected Self-Portraits'*

St Christopher's School, Epsom -

*'Characters from James and the Giant Peach'*

### SPORTS CATEGORY:

#### WINNER:

Edenhurst Preparatory School - *'Online PE'*

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Cransley School - *'Challenge 2 running & balancing pasta!'*

#### HONOURABLE MENTION:

Myddelton College - *'Variety of Remote learning PE lessons'*

### STEM CATEGORY:

#### WINNER:

Wetherby Senior School - *'Year 9 Maths - Spin the wheel'*

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED:

CATS College Canterbury - *'Nuclear fusion'*

Heathfield Knoll School -

*'Creating 3D digital monsters (Year 5 and 6 STEAM)'*

### CATEGORY "OTHER":

#### WINNERS:

Thornton College - *'Year 4 Science - Mrs Nerg 'On the Line'*

TASIS England - *'6th Grade Speech Contest'*

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Normanhurst School - *'Acts of Kindness'*

#### HONOURABLE MENTIONS:

Howe Green House School -

*'French- Week 4 (basic conversation and counting)'*

Duke of Kent School - *'Growth Mindset - The Jedi Way'*

# Contact for ISA Area Committees

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# ISA ARTS

We have all had to change and adapt during these unprecedented times, however our pupils' creativity has never stopped. Well done to everyone who took part in ISA Arts Competitions this academic year; we have been really impressed to see so much talent throughout. Visit the ISA website to see the lists of results and the winning pieces.

The ISA National Arts calendar for the next academic year is now available on our website. We hope you will enjoy the opportunities ISA Arts has to offer, as much as you did this academic year.

## Easter Egg Competition

We always love to see the creativity and imagination of younger pupils with our competitions dedicated for EYFS and primary schools. Thank you to everyone who took part in the Easter Egg Competition this year and congratulations to our winners.



Alderley Edge School for Girls, Our Friendship Circle - EYFS



St Josephs School, Eva Busuttil,  
Lady in her garden - KS2



Holland-House, Leela Mistry,  
London Eggstravaganza - KS1

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### HANDWRITING COMPETITION (EYFS/KS1/KS2 ONLY)

Entries Open Now  
Deadline: Thursday, 24 June 2021

#### SPORTS DESIGN COMPETITION

Entries Open Now  
Deadline: Thursday, 8 July 2021

#### NATIONAL ART COMPETITION 2021

Entries Open Now  
Please check our website for the regional dates and deadlines.

Visit the ISA Arts webpage to submit your entries and to see the ISA Arts calendar for next academic year with more opportunities for your pupils.  
<https://www.isaschools.org.uk/arts>

## STEAM competition

Well done to everyone who took part in the first ISA STEAM Competition. Congratulations to the winners (Visit the ISA website to see the projects):

KS2 category: St Michael Steiner School, Shao-Ren Hsu: The Amazing Lego Disc Car

KS3 category: Malvern St James, Imogen Hobbs and Faith Horton: Environmental Sustainability Club

KS4 category: KD Grammar School, Akmal Ahmad, Zain Hussain and Issa Ishaq: BriefCase

Follow us on Twitter @ISAartsUK  
and Instagram @isaschoolsarts



@ISAARTSUK

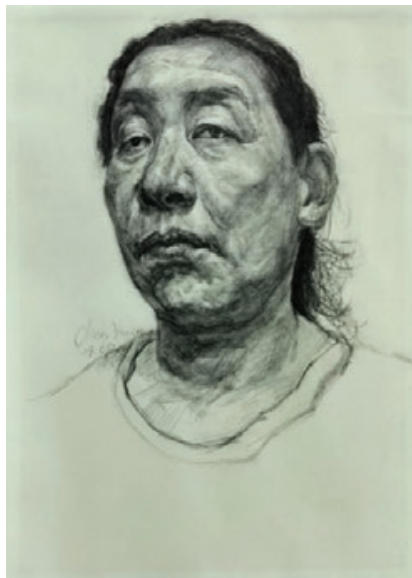


ISASCHOOLSARTS





Bryn Davies, The Boat in Batik, Claires Court



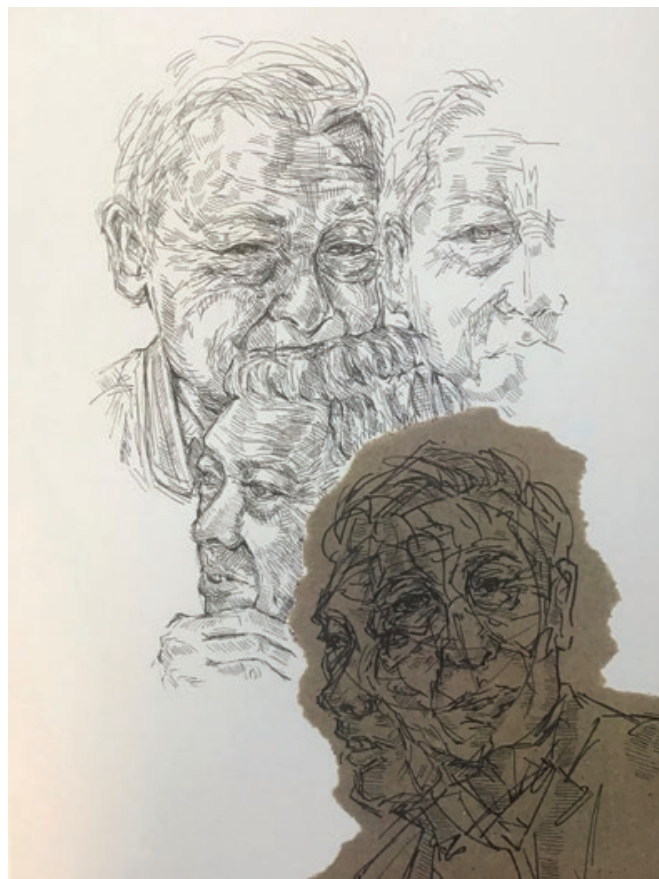
Yiwen Chen, Muqin, LVS Ascot



Class 3 & 4 Art Club, Rainforest Reptiles, Grantham Preparatory School



Dominic Turner Burr, Fighting Back, Princethorpe College



Chloe Chan, Sketchbook excerpts, New Hall School

## National Art Competition 2020

The Art Competition 2020 was very different than in previous years with all the regionals and finals being held online.

We were very pleased to share with you the finalists which were displayed on the virtual gallery a few months ago. The standard of artwork was incredible once again. Well done to everyone who took part in the competition and congratulations to the winners. Visit the ISA website to view the list of results and the winning pieces.



Millie Sims, Come On Chameleon, Rosemead Preparatory School



Sharon Liu, Water Dress, Trinity School



Year 2, Owl Friends, Lyonsdown School

# 2021 highlights...

## Limitless Skills Series

### #WeAreLimitless

#### EVENTS COMING UP VISIT ISA WEBSITE TO REGISTER

##### BADMINTON

(U11-U18M/F) Open  
University of Nottingham  
25 November 2021

##### BASKETBALL

(U18M) Open  
ACS Cobham  
3 December 2021

##### CLIMBING

(U15-U18M/F) Open  
Redpoint, Worcester  
26 November 2021

##### FOOTBALL

(U11/U13/U15F) Open  
LVS Ascot  
5 October 2021

(U16/U18M) National Finals  
ACS Cobham  
21 December 2021

##### HOCKEY

Open  
Lee Valley (Olympic Park)  
U11F – 11 November 2021  
U13F – 17 November 2021  
U14M/F – 9 November 2021

##### JUNIOR TRIATHLON

(U9-U11M/F) Open  
Woodlands School, Hutton Manor  
1 October 2021

##### RUGBY

(Contact/Touch)  
(U10/U11/U16M/F) Open  
Shelford Rugby Club – Cambridge  
19 November 2021

##### SAILING

Open  
Queen Mother Reservoir Berkshire  
24 September 2021

##### SKIING

(U9-U18M/F) Open  
Hemel Hempstead  
4 October 2021

##### SWIMMING

(U9-U19M/F) National Finals  
London Olympic Pool  
4 or 5 December 2021 (TBC)

ISA hosted its second virtual "Limitless Skills Series" during spring term. The virtual event was created to be an inclusive, fun, and engaging national campaign for ISA pupils across the UK to get active. Utilising the cutting edge video-based platform powered by TopYa, the Series intended to engage today's children, who are always using digital platforms on mobiles, tablets and computers. We wanted to transform their time spent on-screen into time spent being physically active. The Series ran for 6 weeks, with 60 themed challenges provided. High profile athletes provided by Sports for Schools opened and closed each week with an inspirational video.

#### The six athletes were:

1. Peter Bakare - GB Olympic Volleyballer
2. Issy Haigh – GB Gymnast
3. Frederica Afrifa – International sprinter
4. Katrina Hart – GB Paralympic Sprinter
5. Joe Roebuck – GB Olympic Swimmer
6. Anna Jackson – GB Paralympic Wheelchair Basketballer

Children of all ages joined the challenge, and upon submission of their best performance video they received personal coaching feedback from the team of experienced virtual coaches. They earned points for each video submitted which helped them climb leader boards and win prizes provided by Limitless Kit and Sports for Schools. If you would be interested in an athlete coming into your school and providing a whole school inspirational day, please do email [isasport@isaschools.org.uk](mailto:isasport@isaschools.org.uk), or call 01799 610 189 for more information.

Congratulations to all schools and pupils that took part, we hope you enjoyed the series.

#WeAreLimitless



#### Top Placed Schools

- 1st Crackley Hall School
- 2nd St. Margaret's Prep
- 3rd Tower College
- 4th Saint Pierre School
- 5th Broomfield House
- 6th Highclare
- 7th Rosemead Prep
- 8th Faraday School
- 9th Oakfield Prep
- 10th Dixie Grammar

#### Completed Series

1. Willythefish808 Tower College
2. IslaL Rosemead Prep
3. JumanjiQueen Saint Pierre
4. ChicoCl ISA General
5. Tianagoodwin137 Saint Pierre
6. ChloeHughes Broomfield House
7. AtlantaG09 St Edward's Prep
8. Summer1204 Highclare
9. Sami08 Highclare
10. FloLawrie Broomfield House
11. AlexHuiFitnessMaster Tower Coll
12. AmeliaHughes Broomfield Hse
13. FoxyL Crackley Hall

#### Completed Series

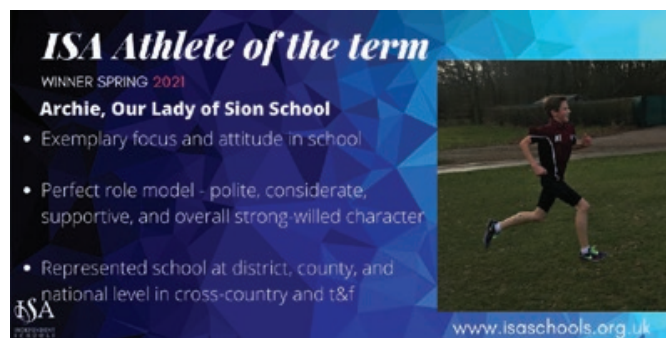
14. Sienna7 Broomfield House
15. Angela\_H3009 Tower College
16. WTH Pitsford
17. George210 Crackley Hall
18. AlbertP Dixie Grammar
19. ZachAH Woodlands School HM
20. Pbuiltitude Oakfield Prep
21. Callummurray1 Oakfield Prep
22. AC2 Crackley Hall
23. AC1 Crackley Hall
24. SialeV14 Broomfield House
25. AmityB Radnor House
26. Arlob Radnor House

# ISA Athlete of the Term

The ISA Athlete of the Term Award is an exciting opportunity for us all to recognise those outstanding achievements being made by your school pupils. We've seen and heard of some wonderful success stories over the last few months, over the spring term we received more than fifty nominations! We would like you to help us celebrate more of these stories with the network of ISA Members. Please go to the sport section of the ISA website for more information



Maddie has spent the last term like all other children, in lockdown, with one of the main motivators in life taken away: sport. Maddie loves all sport but her main love is gymnastics. In the middle of January Maddie decided that she would fundraise for her gymnastics club who had recently thrown out the foam used in their pit due to a leak. Maddie decided that she would run 4 marathons in 4 weeks. This was a massive challenge and came with its ups and downs, however with the support of the gym club her friends/family and Kingsley School, she managed to raise over £1,400. Such an achievement for someone so young. During this time Maddie has also been training on zoom 5 days a week for gymnastics, 2 days a week for dance and has also managed to keep up with her piano lessons and Devon squad training. Maddie's enthusiasm for running didn't stop with her marathon challenge, she also ran and won the inter-house cross country race. Well done, Maddie!



Archie takes every opportunity to compete and represent the school in a variety of sports. His attitude and focus is outstanding in lessons and extra-curricular sport. Archie shows the strongest aspects of sportsmanship in everything he does and is a perfect role-model for the other students, and is polite, considerate and very popular with his peers. Archie's main strength is in the endurance running field, both cross-country and track and field. He has represented the school at district, county, and national level in cross-country. Despite the challenges faced during this pandemic, Archie has continued to train hard and runs regularly, preparing to compete when the opportunity returns. He entered the most entries for the Schools 'Coastal Challenge' and helped Our Lady of Sion complete the distance two weeks early. Well done, Archie!

## ISA Big Channel Challenge

We are challenging your students to collectively swim the distance of the English Channel during the summer term 2021. That's 22 miles. 35 kms. 35,000 metres. 3,500,000 cms. By encouraging each student to set their own goals and contribute to the school's total distance you'll see the miles clock up quickly. Can you swim back from France? There's no limit on the distance your school can swim, so keep going and see how far you can get! Depending on facilities, schools will either fit this into existing swimming lessons, organise a special challenge evening, or make additional time available for pupils to work towards their total. There will even be prizes and trophies to win!

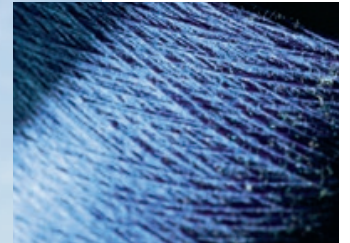
During the last event Tettenhall College swam 150km, the same as crossing the channel 4 times! Eveline Day School completed the challenge at a one-day swimming gala with staff and parents getting involved too! St Hilda's School raised £1,228 by asking each student to swim for 30 minutes.

For more information visit the <https://www.isaschools.org.uk/sports/isa-sport-national-events>



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