

ISA JOURNAL

ARTS AND CREATIVITY | ISSUE 34 | MAY 2025



ISA
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

A photograph of three students, a girl and two boys, smiling and looking towards the right. They are wearing school uniforms: light blue shirts, dark blue V-neck sweaters, and tan trousers. The girl on the left is also wearing a dark blue plaid skirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

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Welcome

FROM THE CEO

Rudolf Eliott Lockhart



I wanted the final issue of the Journal for this academic year to have a positive feel to it. We all know how challenging a year it has been across the Association following the Government's imposition of VAT on school fees, but in these pages, I'm hoping we can offer you something that might raise spirits. This issue is a celebration of one of the aspects of our schools that is particularly outstanding, and which never fails to

give joy. We are therefore taking the time to showcase creativity and the arts in our schools.

Creativity and the arts have long been at the heart of what makes independent schools so distinctive and inspiring. In a world that is rapidly evolving, where technology and automation are reshaping how we live and work, the ability to think imaginatively, collaborate meaningfully, and express oneself authentically has never been more vital. Our schools are uniquely positioned to nurture these qualities, fostering environments where creativity flourishes alongside academic excellence.

All good schools should seek to encourage creativity, but the nature of independent schools makes it more natural to deliver it. The flexibility that comes from independence over the curriculum gives more space for different approaches. Creativity can be hard to measure, and accountability within the state system can sometimes tend towards those things that can be measured. Our schools are directly accountable to their parents, and parents understand why

creativity is such an essential part of education. Parents can – and do – make subjective assessments about our schools, so we know how important it is to show that pupils have the time and space necessary to express themselves and their imaginations.

This issue celebrates some of the many ways our member schools champion creativity in all its forms. From Watchorn Christian School's heartfelt integration of music into their faith-based ethos, to the British International School in New York City's innovative student citizenship award program, we see creativity shaping character and community alike. Julie Robinson, CEO of ISC, shares her insightful reflections on why creative education remains essential across the independent sector.

We also explore the pioneering arts-based curriculum at ArtsEd, which exemplifies how creativity can be woven seamlessly into every aspect of learning. Faraday Prep School makes a compelling case for creativity as a critical skill in an increasingly automated world. Meanwhile, the performing arts team at Claremont School remind us of the power of collaboration and teamwork in unlocking students' potential. And we celebrate Maple Walk School's outstanding achievement in sport, demonstrating that creativity and excellence extend beyond the arts into every arena of school life.

As you read these stories, I encourage you to reflect on how creativity enriches your own school community and how we, as an association, can continue to support and inspire each other. Together, we are shaping a future where independent schools remain beacons of innovation, imagination, and opportunity for every child.



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WRITE FOR THE JOURNAL

Our Members want to hear about best practice, so if you would like to contribute an article to the ISA Journal, please contact comms@isaschools.org.uk with an outline of your topic. See our website for guidelines.

ISA JOURNAL

ARTS AND CREATIVITY | ISSUE 34 | MAY 2025



Saxophonist from Leighton Park School, dancer from Scarisbrick Hall, and textile installation from Heathfield School



English department
at Ratcliffe College.



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MARK AND SHANI OZENBROOK, FOUNDERS AND HEADTEACHERS AT WATCHORN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

A small school with big ambitions and a passion for music

Music is a universal language. It moves us, inspires us, and shapes not only individuals but entire communities. At Watchorn Christian School in Alfreton, Derbyshire, music is woven deeply into the fabric of our identity, reflecting both our creative ambitions and our bold faith.

Humble beginnings, bold vision

Founded in 2016 by a determined group of parents and Watchorn Church, our school began with just two children and a simple mission: to provide affordable, high-quality Christian education. The journey was far from easy, but through faith, resourcefulness, and community spirit, we grew, expanding from a nursery to a full-capacity primary school of over 50 pupils. Our students now come from both local and distant communities, drawn by our distinctive, faith-driven ethos.

Standing strong amid challenges

There are many challenges that small schools face: finance, politics, resources, and facilities. Add in our Christian ethos, and we open another array of difficulties, but at Watchorn Christian School, we embrace our identity. As other small independent schools face closure, we have seen growth. Our secret: faith and authenticity. We rely fully on God's promise, "all things are possible!" We've learned to be imaginative with the resources that we have,

and creative in our curriculum, but we have also learned (again and again) of the goodness of God. We've received significant anonymous donations, a minibus, loads of laptops, and even a terrace house delivered at just the right time. This has encouraged us on even the most challenging days and motivates us to give our children the enjoyable education they need and deserve in their formative years.

Faith, creativity, and community

Our recent decision to join ISA marks an exciting new chapter, opening doors to wider opportunities and collaborations. Already, our pupils have participated in national singing competitions and sporting events, thriving alongside much larger schools and returning home inspired and full of joy.

The power of music in education

Music, led by the school's music teacher, Mr Horn, is central to life at Watchorn. He believes that, "Teaching children to master challenging works by the great classical composers such as Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, and Mozart builds not only musical skill but confidence and character. That is when a ten-year-old stands before an audience and sings a Handel aria, accompanied by a string quartet, something transformative happens. They discover their strength, resilience, and potential".



Our music curriculum is rigorous yet joyful. Pupils learn vocal technique, sight-reading, and emotional expression. They perform regularly, both within school and in the wider community, often tackling repertoire normally reserved for professionals. The results are profound: children who once struggled with anxiety or self-doubt now shine on stage, their achievements celebrated by proud families and peers.

A 'City on a Hill': Outward-looking and inclusive

We asked that the Lord open doors for the children to have every opportunity before them and share with others outside of our community. Music and sport are just two of our subjects that allow us to respond to the outward-looking command to be "a city on a hill," as we continue to work with others in ISA. We are excited to embrace further opportunities, knowing that giving the children a rich, meaningful, and exciting education is important to our staff. Joining ISA, which promised additional opportunities for our children to share experiences with other schools across the country, was the obvious next step. Our committed parents trusted us and took proactive steps to support our move.

Looking ahead

As Watchorn Christian School continues to grow, we remain rooted in our founding vision: to offer an authentic, creative, and faith-filled education. Our story is one of humble beginnings, bold ambitions, and the transformative power of music and faith. We invite you to visit, to witness the joy and creativity of our community, and perhaps to be inspired by what is possible when a school dares to be unashamedly itself.



Mark and Shani Ozenbrook are founding members of the school, which started in 2018.



Students and teachers celebrating at the first Citizenship Awards banquet

WAVELL BLADES
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER AT THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF NEW YORK

The Citizenship Awards: Engaging upper school students and strengthening school community

At The British International School of New York (BIS-NY), we recognise the unique challenges our Upper School students (ages 14-18) face in engaging meaningfully with the school community. Many of these students, especially in an international setting, often feel disconnected from the broader school environment. To address this challenge, we introduced the Citizenship Awards, an innovative initiative aimed at encouraging students to contribute to their school and wider community in ways that go beyond academics.

The Problem: Student Disengagement in a Global School Community

In an international school, students often come from diverse backgrounds and may not always feel a strong connection to the community. For older students, this disconnection can be especially pronounced, as their focus tends to shift more towards preparing for university, leaving them less involved in school-based activities that promote community engagement. At BIS-NY, we observed that many of our Upper School students were disengaged from the extracurricular and community-building activities offered within the school. This lack of engagement led to a diminished sense of belonging, which is a critical factor in student well-being and academic success. To address this, we needed an initiative that would incentivise students to invest time and energy into activities that foster a positive school culture while also developing their leadership and personal growth.

The Solution: Introducing the Citizenship Awards

The Citizenship Awards were introduced as a solution to this disengagement. The programme was designed to recognise and celebrate students' contributions to the school and the broader community, separate from their academic work. The goal was

to create a system that rewards leadership, kindness, and social responsibility—values that are important for their personal growth and integral to fostering a stronger school culture. Students earn points through a variety of activities, such as volunteering, taking leadership roles in clubs, participating in school events, or supporting peers through mentoring. These contributions, often overlooked in traditional academic grading systems, are essential for building character and a sense of responsibility. The points accumulated through these contributions follow students throughout their time in Upper School. Students who accumulate a sufficient number of points are invited to the Citizenship Banquet, a celebratory event where they can showcase their contributions, enjoy the recognition of their peers, and celebrate their good work with their families.

Nature of the Work: Fostering Long-Term Engagement

The Citizenship Awards are designed to be both a recognition system and a motivational tool for students. Unlike traditional academic awards, which focus solely on grades and test scores, this initiative celebrates the holistic development of students as they engage with their school community. One of the key challenges we faced in implementing this initiative was ensuring that the programme was engaging and accessible for all students, regardless of their academic abilities. We wanted the programme to feel inclusive and provide opportunities for all students to contribute in meaningful ways, whether through leadership, volunteerism, or smaller acts of kindness. To ensure this, we developed a flexible points system that rewards a wide range of activities—from helping younger students get ready for the day to organising charity events. The activities that earn points are not limited to those requiring exceptional skills or leadership experience, which helps ensure that every student has the opportunity to get involved.



Partnerships and School Community

The Citizenship Awards programme has been designed not only to engage students but also to build stronger connections within the wider school community. While the programme primarily focuses on internal engagement, it also encourages students to develop partnerships with local businesses and organisations. For example, students have participated in charity fundraising events where they work to raise money for local charities such as the Bowery Mission and Riverkeeper. These partnerships enhance students' understanding of social responsibility and encourage them to see the value of community collaboration. By working with local businesses and organizations, students gain real-world experience in event planning, leadership, and community service. The programme also strengthens the relationship between the school and parents. The Citizenship Banquet, where students are recognised for their efforts, is an event that actively involves families, providing them with an opportunity to celebrate their children's accomplishments and reinforce the importance of community engagement.

Evidence of Success: Measuring the Impact

Since its introduction, the Citizenship Awards have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from students, teachers, and parents. Students have become more involved in extracurricular activities, and there has been an increase in leadership roles taken by Upper School students in clubs and school events.

Feedback surveys indicate that students feel more connected to the school and more motivated to contribute to their community. Many students have expressed that being recognised for their efforts outside the classroom has given them a greater sense of purpose and pride in their school. We have also seen a significant increase in the number of students attending the Citizenship Banquet, with over 30% of Upper School students attending in 2025, demonstrating the value they place on this recognition. The event has become a highlight of the school year, and the students who participate in it carry a sense of pride and achievement that extends beyond their academic success.

Sustainability and Replication

One of the core strengths of the Citizenship Awards is its sustainability. The programme is designed to be flexible, allowing it to grow and adapt over time. While the initiative was initially introduced as a response to student disengagement, we are now seeing how it has fostered a long-term culture of engagement, leadership, and responsibility. Furthermore, the Citizenship

Awards have proven to be easily replicable in other schools. The flexible structure allows other institutions, regardless of their size or resources, to implement the programme. By focusing on recognising contributions that build community, rather than purely academic success, schools can use the programme to foster a positive and inclusive environment, regardless of their location or school profile.

Conclusion: A Holistic Approach to Student Development

The Citizenship Awards initiative at BIS-NY has not only addressed the challenge of student disengagement but has also created a platform for students to develop crucial life skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and social responsibility. The programme has enhanced the school's culture by encouraging students to contribute positively to their community, fostering a sense of pride and belonging that extends beyond academics. As a result, the Citizenship Awards have proven to be an effective tool for engaging students and strengthening the broader school community. This initiative not only supports the development of well-rounded individuals but also offers a model that can be replicated by other schools looking to engage their students in meaningful ways.



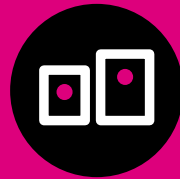
Wavell Blades is the Deputy Headteacher at BIS-NY (an ISA Overseas Affiliate), where he has led various initiatives focused on student engagement, well-being, and community building. He is passionate about creating an inclusive school environment where students thrive academically, socially, and personally. Wavell's work with the Citizenship Awards has earned recognition within the school community for fostering leadership and responsibility in Upper School students. He has 20 years of experience in education and is committed to improving school culture through innovative, student-centred programmes.

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School News

CELEBRATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ACROSS THE ASSOCIATION

Here is a selection of exciting news that has been shared with us from across the ISA membership. Please share your school's news with us at comms@isaschools.org.uk or tag us on X @isaschools to potentially appear in future editions of the Journal, on the ISA website, or shared on social media.



Abbey College Cambridge (E)

Empowering the next generation of medics

Aspiring medics from Abbey College Cambridge, an independent school in the heart of Cambridge, have recently organised and held a highly successful student-led conference exploring how medicine is being transformed by artificial intelligence and technology. Hosting approximately 60 students from Years 11 to 13, the conference was also attended by students from local establishments including Ely College, St. Mary's School, Felstead School and the Cambridge Academy of Science and Technology (CAST).

Following inspiring talks, students were presented with a challenging task to propose an effective AI/technology-based solution to a current medical issue of their choosing. The activity prompted valuable collaboration across schools in small groups and the need to demonstrate teamwork to form a presentation on the subject based on what they had learned during the day, which would then be subject to a short heat format to determine a clear winner. The winning group showcased an impressive piece on using AI to enhance stroke diagnosis.

Talesome: A celebration of creativity through musicals, art, and acrobatics

Fulham School's whole school concert 'Talesome' was an amazing opportunity for our children to showcase the incredible work they do in music, art and drama alike. The audience was taken on an adventure through some of the most incredible musicals of all time, covering work from world-renowned musicals such as The Sound

of Music, Grease & Wicked. The children from Year 2 – Year 11 wowed with costumes, dancing, singing and even acrobatics. The stage was set with large-scale artworks designed by the children across different year groups, and guests received personalised bookmarks to take home. It really was a night to remember.



Fulham School (LW)



Student designer shines at charity fashion show

Tower College's talented designer Matthew claimed first prize at the *Want That Dress Grand Charity Fashion Show*, held at Prescot Parish Church on Thursday, 25 March. Supporting the Breast Mates charity, the event was a celebration of creativity and innovation.

Matthew's winning design – a striking black and yellow ensemble adorned with sunflower motifs – captivated both judges and the audience. Judges Gill Hayden-Jones and Jane Gaynor praised the high standard of entries but agreed that Matthew's creation stood out for its unique charm.



The highlight of the evening came when our Principal proudly wore Matthew's design during the show, showcasing his exceptional talent and inspiring fellow students. Drawing inspiration from Vincent Van Gogh, Matthew's vibrant color palette and intricate detailing ensured his work made a lasting impression.

Alumnus inspires future physicists at DLD College

Scientific students from DLD College London were recently inspired by a visit from a former student of the multi-award-winning school, Luca, and an impressive performance in the prestigious British Physics Olympiad.

Luca returned to familiar surroundings to speak with Year 11 and Year 12 Physics students about his physics education journey, studying the subject at UCL before completing his Masters in Theoretical Physics (Quantum Fields and Fundamental Forces) at Imperial College London. During his engaging talk, Luca shared valuable insights into the transition from A-Level to degree-level Physics, describing the challenge of managing eight demanding modules per year as "like doing 8 A Levels." He also offered practical advice on how to approach the UCAS application process, helping students understand what makes an application stand out.

Centre Academy is punching well above its weight

Centre Academy has teamed up with 12 Rounds Boxing in Clapham, London, to offer all 11–15 year-olds an amazing opportunity to learn to box.

As the PE teacher, Uduma Kalu says "Boxing helps young people develop discipline, focus, and self-control through structured training and goal-setting. It also improves physical fitness by



building strength, endurance, and coordination. Additionally, boxing boosts confidence and self-esteem, teaches resilience and the ability to overcome challenges." Michael Jeffrey, the new Head of School, adds "Watching our students pounding a punch bag and releasing all that pent-up anger and frustration - well, I can share their satisfaction!".

The school has 50 students, all with SEN and requirements. PE and sports are at the top of the agenda - in addition to boxing, the school has access to two gyms, Wandsworth Common, Battersea Park and a local swimming pool. Sports Day, a boisterous family event that ranges from egg and spoon to Javelin, traditionally ends with an inter-house Tug Of War, and for those still standing, a disco.

Pathway to creation: A community garden project



International School of Creative Arts (LW)

ISCA students recently finalised a special community project started in collaboration with the Vicar of St Andrew's Church, Stoke Poges. The aim was to help maintain and develop a quiet and contemplative outdoor space for the enjoyment of the local community.

The latest images of this special project, that our youngest students have been working on over the last year, have been shared on the



Beech Hall School (N)

school website. It has been an exciting, fulfilling, and challenging opportunity for them. They have worked in the community garden and also in the studio to create initial mood boards, and from these, beautiful mosaic tiles which form a meandering pathway on the theme of the 7 Days of Creation.

Beech Hall pupils take the plunge for crisis

In February, members of the Beech Hall School community have faced the freeze for the school's annual Ice Challenge Swim in aid of Crisis, raising a notable £2630 for the homelessness charity – an impressive £1830 more than last year. 70 swimmers aged nine and upwards plunged into the outdoor swimming pool at the Tytherington-based school, conquering icy temperatures of 10.8 degrees to raise much-needed funds for the worthy cause.

Beech Hall's renowned Channel Swim Squad kicked off the three-hour swim set with their confident entries into the water; jumps, dives, and backflips were seen in abundance, culminating in a 10-metre conga that belied the near-arctic temperatures of the water. Confidence remained high throughout the event as more swimmers took to the water, including pupils, staff members, family and friends.

Silk Road project bridges cultures through language



Azbuka International School (LW)

Azbuka International School in London, the UK's only school with a bilingual Russian-English curriculum, undertook a whole-school project centred on the Silk Road, integrating language and content learning through project-based learning (PBL). Students from Year 2 to Year 6 explored Central Asian cultures, languages, and culinary traditions, enhancing their Russian and English skills. Activities included creating bilingual recipe books, researching loanwords, writing and illustrating original stories inspired by Silk Road fables, and designing interactive spice games.

The project culminated in a Silk Road Exhibition and Bazaar, where students presented their work to parents and friends. This initiative not only deepened their understanding of different cultures but also fostered collaboration, communication skills, and a sense of pride in their bilingual identities¹. The hands-on, inquiry-based approach allowed children to take ownership of their learning, connecting classroom activities with real-world experiences.

¹ Lytra, V., Gavrilova, M., Hume, P., Loureda, N., Shtykova, T., and Rosenberg, L. (Autumn 2024). Amplifying children's voices and expanding spaces for language and culture learning through a whole-school bilingual Russian-English project. *Languages Today*, 24-25.

Many ISA Members' Schools engage in partnerships with state schools to expand the opportunities and experiences available to pupils and teachers from all schools involved. Celebrating these projects is essential in showcasing the independent sector's value and inspiring more schools to play their part. ISA schools can share their partnerships on the ISC Schools Together website:

www.schoolstogether.org/about/adding-school-partnerships/.



UPCOMING COMPETITIONS

SPORTS COVER DESIGN COMPETITION

(Year 5-13)

Deadline: 11 June



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ALL OUR EVENTS, INCLUDING THE ISA ARTS CALENDAR FOR 2025-2026 YEAR (COMING SOON), PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT ISAARTS@ISASCHOOLS.ORG.UK

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The A Cappella Competition held at Leighton Park School on Tuesday 18 March brought over 200 students together for a brilliant day of singing, well done to everyone who took part and congratulations to the winners.

The 35 Finalists from the Public Speaking Competition offered brilliant speeches and performances at Gonville & Caius College, University of Cambridge on Wednesday 26 March. KS2 students were asked to perform a poetry reading, whilst KS3-5 were challenged to write and deliver their own speech. The competition was supported by the English-Speaking Union, well done to all the participants.

You can find the full list of results on our website.

The virtual STEAM Competition Final took place on Friday 21 March. Well done to all the finalists for their confidence and passion in presenting their innovative projects and congratulations to the winners. Students were invited to design and build a bridge that can support a toy car (Year 3/4), design a robot that could help with a problem in their school (Year 5/6), design a home that can resist flooding (Year 7/9) and Design biodegradable material for clothing (Year 10-13). You can see the results and some of the projects on our website.

We were delighted to announce the results of the Easter Egg Competition and the Book Cover Competition. Congratulations to the winners, results can be found on our website.

Well done to everyone who participated in the Musical Theatre Finals on 30 April at Gosfield School, where talented students showcased their exceptional musical and drama skills.

Congratulations to all the students who delivered brilliant performances at the Drama Competition on 6 May at King's High School Warwick.



Public Speaking Competition - First place Junior - Paris Y, Cumnor House School For Girls (LS)



Easter Egg Competition - First Place Year 1-2, Heath M, St Joseph's School Cornwall (SW)

Poetry Competition

The ISA Poetry Competition this year invited students to write a poem based on the title "My life as..." Congratulations to all the students who took part and to the winners. Winning entries can be found on our website.

My Life as a Fallen Leaf

by Alex B,
Caversham Preparatory School (LW),
First place Year 4-6 Category

My life as a fallen leaf,
I softly sway.
Dancing with the breeze,
In a joyful ballet.

Like whispers of secrets,
The wind is my guide.
Together we soar,
Far and wide.

I shimmer like gold,
As dawn's light peeks.
Through the crimson woods,
The birds sing and speak.

As a symphony of seasons,
I find my peace.
A cycle of life,
Where worries cease.

On the forest floor,
Where whispers stay.
In life's harmony,
I find my way.





JULIE ROBINSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL

Leading through change

Our schools have much to celebrate and be proud of. Given the challenging political climate the independent sector finds itself in, it is more important than ever to highlight our achievements and contributions to wider society. The performing arts is one such success story.

One of the many strengths independent schools possess is the freedom to innovate. They are not limited to the national curriculum, which means they can experiment with teaching, develop new approaches to learning, and support more vulnerable subjects like the creative arts, which are not always as readily available in the state sector. Teachers and senior leadership teams can share such expertise with colleagues in other schools, strengthening the overall education offer and furthering improvements in specific subjects to inspire children.

For years, our schools have been widening access to the arts through mutually beneficial partnerships. These projects vary in size and scale, ranging from drama workshops to classical music tuition.

Ardingly College holds a special place in my heart, since I taught there and led the junior school. It hosts an annual dance day for pupils. This year, the school welcomed over 60 children from partner primary schools, alongside 12 Ardingly Prep pupils. Together, the young dancers learned and performed three routines to an audience of family and friends.

Other partnership events see schools linking across local communities, spreading joy and a love of music as they go. Pupils at Ibstock Place School, led by the school's music department, regularly perform live music for long-term patients at Queen Mary's Hospital, providing therapeutic benefits. They have performed concerts for residents and staff at local care homes, offering entertainment while strengthening those all-important community links.

One of the wonderful things about our sector is the sheer diversity of provision; the vast range of schools means there is an environment to suit every child. Every school serves an important purpose, and for performing arts schools this mission includes honing the talents of pupils with a passion for music, dance, and drama.

Institutions like Hampstead Fine Arts College offer valuable specialist education, enabling students to explore the subjects they excel at in great depth. They help the creative arts sector to thrive, maintaining its position as one of the UK's most successful industries for internal investment and as an exporter of talent.

For almost 50 years, Hampstead Fine Arts College has delivered specialist education in the arts and humanities. The curriculum offers subjects ranging from film studies and photography to dance and drama. Alongside traditional GCSEs and A levels, the college offers a portfolio course, which gives students the unique freedom to create their own personalised syllabus.

Many performing arts schools offer partial and full scholarships and bursaries, giving children and young people life-changing educational opportunities. Several other specialist arts schools provide means-tested bursaries up to the value of 100% under the Government's Music and Dance Scheme.

These are just a few examples of the valuable work our sector does to advance the performing arts. As we navigate the landscape post-VAT on fees, we can demonstrate the extraordinary amount our schools can – and indeed, already do – offer within the educational ecosystem, supporting the Government's mission to widen access to music education and arts subjects.



Julie Robinson, Chief Executive of The Independent Schools Council

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Legal Corner with Penningtons Manches Cooper



Martyn's Law – Implications for schools

With the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, receiving royal assent on 3 April, SLTs will need to take action to ensure compliance with the new requirements.

The Act introduces a tiered system for compliance, split between 'standard duty' and 'enhanced duty' premises, depending on their capacity. Typically, venues with a capacity of 800 or more would fall under the enhanced duty, but the Act creates an exception for all primary, secondary and further education premises, which will always fall under the standard duty regardless of capacity.

As standard duty occupiers, schools will be required to notify the Security Industry Authority (SIA) of their premises and implement appropriate public protection measures. The SIA will be responsible for the enforcement of the Act, and will have the power to issue fines, notices and criminal sanctions for non-compliance after the Act is implemented.

Public protection procedures should be designed to minimise the risk of physical harm during evacuation, lockdown and other protective measures during a terrorist attack. The requirements will not be entirely novel for schools, and the monetary cost should be small given that physical measures are not required. Procedures should consider communication channels (both between staff and to students), and the availability of appropriate places for shelter/evacuation.

The Government has indicated that the transition period for the Act will last for at least two years from 3 April 2025. During this period, there will be no legal requirement to comply with the Act. It is anticipated that further regulations and guidance relating to the Act will be published during this time, and SLTs will therefore need to keep abreast of developments over this period.





FRANCESCA ELLSMOOR
EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER AT AUCKLAND COLLEGE

The art of becoming: Nurturing creativity and character

When I walk through the corridors of Auckland College, I'm often struck by the quiet magic that unfolds in the most unexpected corners. A group of pupils in the art studio, joyfully immersed in colour and texture. The gentle melody of a piano drifting from the music room. The quiet focus of a ballet class, where children move with grace, discipline, and determination. These moments are not incidental; they are central to who we are.

At Auckland College, we believe that education is far more than the sum of academic outcomes. It's about nurturing the whole child, mind, body, and spirit, through every season of the year. And at the heart of our holistic approach is a deep, unwavering commitment to the Arts.

The Arts: A Foundation for Flourishing

We understand that creative expression is not just a luxury, it's a vital part of human development. From Reception through to Year 11, our pupils are encouraged to explore and express themselves through dance, drama, music, visual arts, and creative writing. These experiences nurture not only artistic skill but also self-confidence, resilience, empathy, and a sense of identity. Through our tailored Arts curriculum and co-curricular offerings, pupils learn to communicate, to collaborate, to persevere, and to dream.

One of our most cherished partnerships is with The Royal Ballet School. This year, pupils have had the extraordinary opportunity to participate in Royal Ballet sessions, developing balance, grace and discipline while discovering the pure joy of movement. For many, it's their first encounter with classical dance; for others, it's a deepening of an existing passion. But for all, it is a transformative experience.

Creativity, Community, and Confidence

The Arts at Auckland are not confined to the timetable. They spill into every part of school life. We nurture pupils beyond the classroom, and the fun doesn't stop at the end of an academic

term; it continues from 7:30 am until 6:00 pm, 51 weeks of the year. Our Out of Hours Care programme is designed to serve the needs of families and support our hardworking parents with flexible, high-quality wraparound childcare.

On any given week, pupils in Out of Hours Care can explore butterfly symmetry painting, spring-themed yoga, and memory box-making. We've seen the power of storytelling come alive through rainbow crafts, Easter bonnet parades, and even Kahoot quizzes designed to challenge and delight. In partnership with Gymfinity and Beth Tweddle Gymnastics, pupils from Reception to Year 6 recently took part in a dynamic gymnastics session, building strength, confidence, and coordination through play and performance. In Sefton Park, the laughter of children playing rounders echoed under the spring sunshine, while in our classrooms, they were creating handprint animals, building Lego masterpieces, or quietly painting spring murals. These aren't just activities; they are opportunities for personal growth and joyful discovery.

This spirit of exploration and creativity is what led Charlie in Year 2 to take first place in the national ISA Comic Strip Competition, Key Stage 1 category, with his brilliantly imaginative entry *Josh to the Rescue*. The judges praised Charlie's "nice, clear, big drawings," "excellent colouring," and "engaging dialogue and story." As a reward, Charlie and the other first-place winners have been invited to a special workshop at The Cartoon Museum, a wonderful opportunity to further spark creativity and confidence. We couldn't be prouder. His achievement is a testament to the way storytelling, art, and voice come together so naturally in our youngest pupils.

Character Education Through Creativity

At Auckland College, we believe that creativity and character go together. Whether through drama that encourages empathy, or music that teaches discipline and collaboration, the Arts offer a powerful route to character development. Our pupils learn what it means to be adaptable, compassionate, and courageous, qualities that will serve them long after they leave our classrooms.



We see these qualities in so many of our pupils, but perhaps none more clearly than in Harrison. A dedicated and talented skier, Harrison has regularly represented Auckland College in regional competitions, recently achieving a top-three finish. His enthusiasm for the sport has gone beyond competition, he is now preparing to take part in a sponsored ski, performing daring stunts such as skiing backwards or on one leg, all to raise money for a neurodiverse charity. It's a beautiful example of passion paired with purpose.

Harrison's commitment extends well beyond the slopes. He actively promotes after-school clubs to his peers and younger pupils, encouraging wider participation and building community spirit. In martial arts, another of his passions, Harrison has played a key role in helping external providers launch a now-thriving club at the school. His talent, maturity, and work ethic recently led to him being recommended for a coaching course, an opportunity rarely offered to someone his age. In every way, Harrison exemplifies the kind of holistic development we strive to nurture: a young person who pursues excellence with humility, gives back to his community, and inspires others by simply being himself.

Voices That Inspire: Our Choir and Anthem

One of the most powerful expressions of community at Auckland College is our school choir. Whether singing at special events or in competitions, our choir brings pupils together in harmony, literally and figuratively. It's more than music; it's a celebration of unity, pride, and shared identity.

Their favourite piece to perform is the Auckland College Anthem, an uplifting, heartfelt expression of who we are as a school community:

"We come to Auckland to learn, to lead
It's a special community
Where values beat strong in our hearts
And make us family.

At Auckland sights are on the stars
Ambitious spirit makes who we are.

We know we're stronger side by side
Our goals are closer when we're unified.

Acting with compassion, care, and empathy
Always ready to lend a hand to anyone in need.
We take the time to understand
And know our quest for knowledge is what helps us grow.

We are loyal and always hold each other close
Respect for one another is what matters most.
Our positive attitude means we're not afraid
To face a new challenge or be adaptable to change.

We act with morals and dignity always noble,
Examples of integrity
With motivation, determination
We can be our best selves in all situations.

So come to Auckland to learn, to lead
Join a special community
Feel values beat strong in your heart
Be part of a family."

Sung with passion and pride, the anthem serves as a reminder of the values we hold dear: compassion, respect, ambition, and community. And through the powerful voices of our pupils, these values are shared, celebrated, and passed on.

A Culture of Belonging and Celebration

Our families often tell us that Auckland College feels like a second home, and the Arts are a big part of that. Whether it's the buzz of a school production, the quiet satisfaction of finishing a sketch, or the shared joy of dancing with friends, the Arts create community. Parents regularly express how the school's creative approach has helped their children settle in, especially those new to the UK. Our welcoming ethos and strong focus on global citizenship ensure that every pupil feels seen, supported, and inspired to share their own story, through whatever medium speaks to them. As one parent put it: "Auckland works holistically with pupils and families, there's no one-size-fits-all approach here. Each pupil is seen as an individual. They are celebrated, encouraged, and empowered."

Looking Ahead: Every Moment Counts

As we move forward, our commitment to the Arts remains central to our vision. We believe that a truly great education nurtures both academic achievement and creative exploration. It's not about choosing one over the other, it's about recognising that both are essential. Whether through ballet or bug hunts, poetry or painting, drama or dance, our aim is always the same: to develop confident, curious, compassionate young people who know how to express themselves and connect with the world around them.

At Auckland College, every pupil is an artist. Every voice matters. Every moment counts. And every pupil belongs.



Francesca Ellsmoor is the Executive Headteacher of Auckland College Independent School, a successful business owner, and Non-Executive Director of an FCA-regulated company, combining strategic financial expertise with a passion for inclusivity and innovation. Shortlisted for the Cheshire Woman of the Year Award 2025, she is dedicated to improving life chances for young people through high-quality education, advocating for equity, parental choice, and inclusivity. As a mother of four in independent education, Francesca strives to prepare pupils for success in a rapidly changing world.



Professional Development

ISA offers exclusive professional development opportunities tailored for educators and leaders within independent schools. Members enjoy discounted rates on our comprehensive range of courses designed to enhance skills and broaden perspectives. By participating, you can advance your career and positively impact both students and the school community.

We are delighted to provide a diverse selection of online development options covering a wide array of topics. Each course combines expert knowledge, many with valuable networking opportunities.

Cost

The rate for most online courses is £130 / £160 (Member / non-Member rate) per delegate.

How to book

For more information on our programme and to book, visit the website at www.isaschools.org.uk/events

Inspections:

The ISI Framework - an overview

9.15-12.15, 11 Jun 2025 Zoom

Single Central Record - Getting it right

9.30am - 3pm, 17 Jun 2025, Zoom

[LP/SLP] Leadership:

Releasing your inner leader

9.30am - 3pm, 9 June 2025, Zoom

Difficult Conversations - the legal side

9.30am - 3pm, 20 Jun 2025, Zoom

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Pathway [EDIP]

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) – knowledge, application and the legal framework

9.30am – 3pm, 10 Jun 2025, Zoom

The School Admission Process - what you can and can't do, and how to do it right

9.30am – 3pm, 29 January 2026, Zoom

[SLP] Leadership:

How to be an effective Senior Leader

9.30am - 3pm, 13 Jun 2025, Zoom

SEND:

SENCO Training - For those responsible for SEND provision

10am – 12.45pm, 16 Jun 2025, Zoom

SEND: Dyslexia - tapping the Talent

9.30am – 3pm, 25 June 2025

SEND: In the Classroom

10am-12.45pm, 26 Jun 2025, Zoom

The SEND Labyrinth – advice for all Headteachers and Senior Managers

1.30pm – 4pm, 26 Jun 2025, Zoom

More:

Marketing and Admissions: Maximising your output

9.30am - 3pm, 18 Jun 2025, Zoom

Learning: Maths Movers

9.30am – 3pm, 27 Jun 2025, Zoom

PSHE - a different approach

9.30am - 3pm, 24 Jun 2025, Zoom

ISA / ISC Digital Conference 2025

9am – 5pm 19 June 2025 Roehampton University, London, SW15 5PJ - only £80

This conference is designed to bring together school leaders from across a wide range of contexts, regardless of where they are on their digital journey. Our aim is to help leaders navigate the sometimes-murky waters of EdTech so they can go away well-informed and confident about progressing with their own digital strategies.



ISA Accreditations

Our Professional Development Programme provides high-quality training opportunities for a wide range of school staff, promoting excellence in independent education across the board. ISA accreditations help support our Members and their staff in a range of different areas, providing professional development opportunities that keep schools up to date and add value to staff's credentials.

Providing high-quality continuous professional development (CPD) for staff is an essential tool for schools to maintain best practices, foster excellence in education and keep a competitive edge.

The ISA Certificate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Lead recognises the need for current, detailed and supportive professional development to ensure those who take a leading role in this area develop their skills and knowledge effectively. It is designed to enable all those who have an interest in equity, diversity and inclusion within their setting to maintain best practice.

The ISA Certificate for Senior Mental Health Lead ensures School Leaders remain current and have opportunities to develop a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The scheme aligns with the full DfE specifications for the role and is designed for senior staff with the role of Mental Health Lead within their setting.

The ISA Certificate in Advanced School Leadership recognises excellence in Senior Leadership and celebrates a continuing commitment to drive personal improvement. It is open to those leaders (both members and non-members) who wish to develop their skills and knowledge in school leadership.

The ISA Certificate in School Leadership is designed for aspiring school leaders who are committed to continuous improvement. It's open to both ISA members and non-members, providing a valuable pathway to develop your leadership skills and knowledge. Earning this certificate demonstrates your dedication to professional growth and showcases your advancing leadership capabilities.



Learn more about ISA Accreditations

ISA Awards 2025

Submissions now open

Presented at the Autumn Study Conference in November

Find out more about ISA Awards



School Lunches Reimagined

apetito's Revolutionary Street Food Van

In the ever-evolving landscape of school catering, apetito is leading the charge with its groundbreaking new street food van.

Schools can now transform their catering with apetito's new grab-&-go solution - a distinct server unit which imitates a 'street food' van experience, bringing a breath of fresh air to school catering.

This revolutionary approach to school meals is designed to provide a healthy alternative to traditional grab-&-go offerings, which typically offer pupils unhealthy and uninspiring options like sandwiches, pasties, chocolate and crisps. It also addresses the significant demand for food on the go in large schools with small dining spaces or limited time to complete service.

One of the standout features of apetito's street food van is its ability to combine quality and convenience. It is perfect for busy school environments, allowing pupils to quickly and easily access their meals without compromising on quality. The van provides pupils with meals with a diverse range of delicious and nutritious meals and enables schools to play a significant role in helping pupils broaden their culinary horizons.

apetito's street food van has been designed to cater to the tastes and preferences of prep and senior pupils, amongst who grab-&-go solutions are increasingly popular compared to the traditional dine-in service.

The van features six interchangeable chef-developed 'street food' inspired international restaurant themed menus, with more in development. Utilising the existing apetito catering solution, the van enables schools to offer a different cuisine every single day such as vibrant Mexican dishes from 'La Cantina' or delicious Italian meals from 'Buon Appetito'.

The van brings excitement back to lunchtimes and keeps pupils coming back wondering 'which cuisine will it be tomorrow?'



Proven Success

Launched following a successful trial at The Grange, the school not only found pupils were enjoying the wide variety of meals on offer but also saw a **remarkable 35% increase in hot meal uptake**. This impressive statistic speaks volumes about the appeal of the van. In fact, the van has been so popular with older students, that the school are rolling out another van into its sixth form dining room. As Stephen Gauller, Chief Operating Officer of The Grange School explains:

"Since having the Street Food Van by apetito in our dining hall, we've found the children have been more engaged with their meals and excited to see what cuisine is on the menu that day. The children particularly love 'La Cantina' & 'The Chippy'. We have not only seen an increase in our variety and offering to our older pupils but knowing they're receiving a healthy and nutritious meal in a grab-&-go format, which is going to provide them with the energy they need to finish the school day is fantastic."



Revolutionising School Catering

With its focus on quality, variety, and nutrition, apetito's street food van offers a compelling alternative to traditional school meals.

Schools that choose to partner with apetito will be at the forefront of transforming school catering, providing their pupils with meals that are as enjoyable as they are nutritious.

apetito's dine-in and grab-&-go solutions offer schools high-quality school meals that provide guaranteed safety and nutrition, whilst providing schools with substantial commercial and operational benefits.

By offering an unrivalled premium pre-prepared meal system, apetito likes to think of itself as 'in-house, made easy' specialists. Everything apetito does is designed to simplify your operations and help you gain back control of your kitchen and mealtimes.

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to focus on educating the
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PETER MIDDLETON
HEADTEACHER AT ArtsEd

How a unique curriculum fosters academic and personal excellence

It has long been argued that students who participate in the arts demonstrate improved academic performance, increased self-confidence, and improved social skills. Furthermore, the arts provide students with opportunities to develop essential life skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. As Head of ArtsEd Day School and Sixth Form, I have had the opportunity to reflect upon this first-hand.

ArtsEd – The Context

ArtsEd is no ordinary place, and this quickly becomes evident to those who visit us. There is a unique and very special buzz that is inherent within the School – it stems from the cacophony and energy of simultaneous academic lessons and performing arts training that take place throughout the day. ArtsEd comprises the Day School and Sixth Form for students in Academic Years 7–13. We share our building with the Higher Education part of our institution (providing undergraduate and master's degrees), and this gives our students increased inspiration and aspiration. Collectively, we are international leaders in delivering performing arts education.

The Day School and Sixth Form is consistently one of the most academically successful performing arts schools in the UK while simultaneously preparing students for a future on national and international stages and for careers in other professions too. In 2024, ArtsEd was awarded a 'significant strength' by ISI and the ISA National Award for Excellence, recognising our outstanding curriculum and performing arts achievements.

The 'ArtsEd Curriculum'

What makes the Day School and Sixth Form distinctive is the unique 'ArtsEd Curriculum', which provides world-class vocational training that is integrated within a strong academic education and a caring environment. Our ethos and pastoral care empower students to develop a broad, enhanced set of skills and a deep-seated confidence. All students seeking entry to the Day School and the Sixth Form are auditioned and must meet appropriate academic and vocational standards; there is no automatic entry to the Sixth Form by existing Day School students. These comprehensive audition processes mean that all our students are, by definition, talented.

The exceptional vocational training is delivered by committed, creative professionals who inspire a passion for performance that feeds into all aspects of students' educational and personal development. The emphasis on achieving the highest levels of attainment is maintained throughout the 'ArtsEd Curriculum'. Students are encouraged to develop independent thought and learning, and in the process adopt and promote ArtsEd's values through the 'Six Pillars of Excellence' – Aspiration, Resilience, Teamwork, Self-discipline, Empathy and Drive.

During their individual and collective journeys, students explore who they are, what they stand for and develop their values and aspirations. Consequently, they become quintessentially more of themselves. The individual is right at the heart of our school; as the ISI Inspectors remarked, "Our students can be their natural selves".



At ArtsEd, we are keenly aware that neurodiversity often accompanies and enhances creativity. Neurodiverse students thrive and are supported by the SEND Department; they make excellent progress, and most achieve grades higher than predicted for their GCSEs, especially in English and Maths.

In the Day School, Years 7-11 spend approximately 70% of their time on their academic studies and 30% on their chosen vocational pathway with additional lessons in fitness, yoga, mindfulness activities and choir. In Years 7 and 8, students study a range of traditional academic subjects, including music and one of the two vocational pathways – Acting or Dance. From Year 9, students study for 8 GCSEs and either Dance or Drama GCSE; additionally, they all continue with vocational pathway lessons in acting, dance or musical theatre.

Sixth Form students take a quantum leap in their engagement with the performing arts curriculum, and this reflects and complements their career aspirations. There is a choice of learning pathways which ensures students can select the course of study best suited to their talents and ambitions. Students can choose to immerse themselves in their vocational work, taking one of the following options: BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Performing Arts and 'Practice' (Acting, Dance or Musical Theatre); this is the equivalent of three A levels, and they have the option to take an additional one or two A Levels. Alternatively, students can follow a traditional route of three or four A Levels; this is augmented by a core component of performing arts enrichment.

Creating an integrated environment

It begins with our 'professional etiquette protocol'; this highlights student expectations and is based on industry standards and tailored for each key stage. This sharpens students' attention and focus, and these high levels of professionalism are carried into both the classroom and studio. The timetable and the shape of the day are built to enable students to have regular transitions between their vocational and academic lessons throughout each day. This increases the benefits that the performing arts bring to the learning environment. The creativity and focus that students invest in their vocational classes transfer into the other areas of the curriculum.

At ArtsEd, we strive to embed the arts within all learning. In Geography, students create 3 dimensional artwork to illustrate key concepts; in History, students create films, presentations and artwork in response to the research and analysis of events. These activities allow students to connect with the themes more deeply and enhance their learning. Music is routinely integrated within French lessons; significant elements from Art History are used in Classical Studies to augment and support the teaching and learning. In English, plays and texts are brought to life through enactment and also as they imagine a time in the future when they may deliver the words on a stage or film set. How this might be presented on screen is explored in GCSE Film Studies, where students integrate their artistic skills (performance and creative) within the course; they also directly influence the choice of course content.

At a leadership level, we are conscious of how key aspects of the 'ArtsEd Curriculum' support other areas of cognitive learning and development. Given this, vocational and academic Heads of Department are paired with a member of the Senior Leadership Team in groups called Planning, Appraisal and Development





Groups (PADs). This has brought significant benefit to students and teachers as teaching and learning strategies are shared, developed and enhanced.

Vocational training creates unique opportunities for students to work with experts in their field. Academic teachers attend performances, providing greater insight into the 'whole person'. This enables the building of highly effective adult-student communication and develops increased understanding and mutual respect. As they move through the School, students acquire the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions about their future and are ready for the next step after ArtsEd. Uniquely at ArtsEd, the strong academic curriculum and vocational training mean that our students can either continue within the performing arts sector or seek alternative options within secondary and higher education.

The benefits of an integrated performing arts education

We expect students to take responsibility for their education – to be an active participant in it, rather than a passenger; consequently, they acquire the self-discipline, drive and resilience through their involvement in the performing arts. This builds confidence and self-efficacy and enables them to take ownership of their learning and achieve at the highest levels in all areas of the curriculum. In performance, students are taught to be active listeners and this transfers to the classroom, where they become increasingly reflective and able to develop reasoned answers to questions rather than quick responses.

Through the performing arts, students develop a range of skills, such as problem-solving, communication, creativity and teamwork. They learn the importance of investigative exploration, research, and analysis. These skills are transferred to their academic studies, and students gain a sense of accomplishment and improved self-confidence, which helps to motivate them and achieve their academic goals. There are improvements in cognition, executive attention, and self-discipline, and they become increasingly able to process and retain information by combining visual, aural and kinaesthetic learning styles. This results in an increased focus on their academic studies with enhanced creative, critical thinking, problem-solving and capacity to apply their learning to new situations and experiences. Additionally, a performing arts curriculum develops the student's ability to act swiftly and decisively in response to the dynamic circumstances of a live performance.

At ArtsEd, there are typically over 35 different performance productions each year, and many have multiple performances which require consistency and professionalism. Performance opportunities enhance students' teamwork and leadership skills; these promote a sense of community through a shared spirit

and encourage students' motivation to learn. Creating a piece of performance art requires research, exploration, planning, experimentation, development, refinement, adaptation and then rehearsal to bring about improvement – all before the work is seen by outside eyes. This level of attention to detail, self-reflection, discipline and determination are intrinsic within our culture.

The performing arts provide a safe and supportive environment for self-expression, creativity, and the development of interpersonal skills. This has important implications for learning and social development as students must collaborate and communicate with their peers effectively and constructively to produce a successful performance. Students develop awareness of how their collective individual and group abilities and talents can add to the wider School community. They develop social and emotional skills and learn to communicate their thoughts and feelings constructively. They become better at understanding and interpreting nonverbal cues and demonstrate improved empathy, which enables them to build meaningful relationships with peers and teachers.

Students grow in responsibility for themselves and others, becoming dependable and, in turn, expecting the same from their peers. A performing arts curriculum enhances the students' ability to communicate, share ideas, socialise with their peers, and increase their self-confidence. Their organisational skills become highly developed, ensuring punctuality and the ability to work within deadlines. Cross-age examples of teamwork can, of course, be found throughout education, but at ArtsEd, respect for the shared goal as well as valuing others are key aspects of their professionalism. This breaks down the social hierarchy that can often be found in many secondary schools and prepares them for a future where they will work with others to be successful.

Final Reflections

While ArtsEd provides an ideal environment within which to see the significant advantages of performing arts being integrated within the curriculum, research reflects that such opportunities can benefit all learners. At a time when there is ever-increasing pressure on the curriculum, there is the potential for the performing arts to be squeezed out. I believe that all schools have the ability to draw on creative visual, performing and musical environments to enhance the academic teaching and learning experienced by young people in our schools.



Peter Middleton was appointed as interim Headteacher of ArtsEd in September 2023 and, following a successful tenure, was appointed by the Trustees as the permanent Headteacher in May 2025. He is an experienced Head, Oxford graduate, and has a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Management. A lifelong learner, he is committed to continuous self-improvement and sets high expectations not only for academic excellence but also for the personal development of each student within the performing arts.

He is often asked to compare ArtsEd and Welbeck–Defence Sixth Form College, where he was the Principal and students were on a pathway to technical careers as officers within the armed forces. For him, the similarities are evident every day – young, motivated individuals with clear career aspirations, in schools where leadership, teamwork, mutual respect and self-discipline are at the heart of a broad education.



Why Choosing an Experienced Construction Partner is Key to Designing Your New School Building

As the head teacher, you are no stranger to the importance of creating a caring and safe environment for your pupils. When it comes to a construction project, the decisions you make can significantly impact both the day-to-day experience of your pupils and staff and the long-term success of your estate. One of the most important decisions you will face is selecting the right construction partner.

An experienced company will bring more than just construction and technical expertise to the table. They will understand the unique financial challenges that estates are facing combined with the uncertain political landscape.

From the early concept design stages to the final handover, an experienced construction partner will offer invaluable insight into how design elements can futureproof the building, both from a functional aspect as well as a financial perspective.

Working with a construction firm that has a proven track record in educational building projects is essential. They will not only guide you through planning regulations, sustainability requirements, and health and safety protocols but also offer creative solutions to maximise space and energy efficiency. Their experience ensures that the project is delivered on time and within budget, minimising disruption to school activities.

Choosing an experienced partner that welcomes a collaborative working relationship will ensure that the process is inclusive, and everybody's views are considered. A company that truly understands your vision for the school will bring innovative ideas to life while respecting your values and goals.

Modulek have a wealth of experience with working with ISA members and are proud to hold the ISA Gold Supplier status.

Modulek will be available at the ISA Annual and Autumn Conference and further information can be found on www.modulek.co.uk



The case for creativity in an automated world

The year is 2042.

Current Reception pupils are stepping out of university and into a world transformed—one that looks nothing like the one we knew growing up. It's faster, smarter, and more connected than we ever imagined.

AI is everywhere. Automation hums beneath the surface of most professions. Brain-computer interfaces enable us to control technology with thought alone. Humans have touched down on Mars, and the Moon hosts research bases and mining outposts—visible from orbit through the windows of commercial spacecraft. When thinking about how schools are preparing children for this ultra-efficient new norm, one thing stands above all else: creativity.

As machines take over the repetitive and the logical, it's imagination, originality, and emotional intelligence that define the human edge. These aren't soft skills—they're survival skills. They're what will drive innovation, connection, and meaning in a world of endless possibility. That's why creativity in schools can't be a gimmick. It needs status! And yet, over the past two decades, creativity in education has been quietly pushed to the periphery. Between 2007 and 2023, GCSE music entries nearly halved. A-Level music has seen an even sharper decline, so steep that researchers predict it will disappear from state schools entirely by 2033.

This isn't just a sad statistic for those who love the arts. It's a warning light for our entire economy, culture, and society.

When students lose access to creative subjects, they lose more than the ability to compose a melody or paint on canvas. They lose the chance to explore who they are, to work with others on open-ended problems, and to engage in the kind of thinking that can't be Googled or generated by an algorithm.

We often talk about STEM—and yes, science, tech, engineering, and maths are crucial. But without the A for arts, STEM lacks soul. Creativity is what binds knowledge together, what transforms data into insight, and what turns an idea into something that resonates. Here's the interesting bit: while creativity is fading from classrooms, business leaders are crying out for it. In study after study, employers list creativity as one of the top skills they're looking for, alongside critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. They don't just want someone who can tick the boxes or follow instructions. They want someone who can ask better questions, see patterns others can't, and bring new ideas to the table.

The World Economic Forum lists creativity consistently in its top ten skills for the future. And a survey by LinkedIn revealed it as the most in-demand soft skill across industries, from tech and marketing to finance and healthcare.

So the economic imperative is clear: Creativity isn't a luxury. It's a necessity. It's what makes a company adaptable, a product memorable, and a brand human.

And yet, we continue to strip creative subjects from our schools, often in the name of 'rigour' or budget constraints, failing to see that what we're cutting isn't fluff. It's future currency. As school leaders, we must think about creativity as more than the traditional arts, though they're vital, and see it instead as a great disruptor to rigid thinking. Creativity is a cognitive rebellion that encourages curiosity, risk-taking, mistake-making and problem-solving. It's a direct invitation to neuroplasticity that should be encouraged in all subjects.

The benefits go beyond skills. Students engaged in the arts show higher levels of well-being, stronger school engagement, and even better academic performance across other subjects. Creative education helps build empathy, confidence, and resilience—qualities we desperately need in a world facing climate crisis, political polarisation, and mental health challenges.

“We can't keep preparing children for a world that no longer exists”

We can't keep preparing children for a world that no longer exists. A curriculum built around memorisation and high-stakes testing doesn't equip young people for the real world. What today's—and tomorrow's—students need is an education that helps them create, not just consume; to collaborate, not just compete; to imagine, not just remember. That means embedding creativity in every subject. It means trusting teachers to innovate and giving children space to explore messy, meaningful, and ambitious ideas. It means funding the arts properly, not just with the scraps that are left over.

Imagine walking into a school in 2042—not a sci-fi fantasy, but a real, thriving learning environment. Students are co-creating immersive theatre pieces based on climate science. They're designing AI companions to support isolated older adults. They're blending music, maths, and coding into live performances. They're failing often—and proudly—because they understand that failure is part of invention.

Teachers are facilitators of curiosity, not gatekeepers of content. Learning is interdisciplinary, collaborative, and connected to the wider world. Assessment is based on reflection, portfolios, and real-world application, not just timed exams. In this vision, creativity isn't confined to art rooms or drama studios. It flows through every subject, every hallway, every conversation. It's how the school breathes.

So let's make more room for messiness, for experimentation, for big, bold ideas. Let's protect and elevate creative subjects—not just for their cultural worth, but for their power to shape minds that can thrive in the world ahead.

Because in the end, when the robots can do almost everything, the one thing they can't replicate is us. Our stories. Our imagination.

Our ability to dream something new and bring it to life.

Lucas Motion joined Faraday in 2022, bringing over a decade of teaching and leadership experience, including 10 years in inner-city state schools across London. Prior to joining Faraday, he was Deputy Head at its sister school, Maple Walk. He has a strong background in English and the arts, shaped by his academic training in English and Drama. Lucas enjoys cooking and sports of every kind. He lives in East London with his wife and two children.



¹ Do Schools Kill Creativity, Sir Ken Robinson, Ted Talk, January 2007

UK Child Student Visa: Important changes on the horizon

The UK Home Office has announced significant updates to immigration rules affecting Child Student visas, set to take effect from 29 May 2025. These changes underscore a strengthened commitment to safeguarding the welfare and security of international students under 18.

One of the central pillars of these amendments is the heightened scrutiny of guardianship and care arrangements. UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) officials must now rigorously assess that suitable guardianship, accommodation, and general welfare provisions are securely in place for each child student. Any application involving a nominated guardian, close relative, private foster carer, or a person regularly living with them who has a serious criminal conviction or poses a potential risk will face automatic refusal.

Under the updated rules, educational guardians must explicitly outline their responsibilities in a formal Letter of Undertaking. This document, which must be signed by the guardian, is required to detail clearly their relationship with the child's parents, confirm adequate accommodation and financial support arrangements, and commit explicitly to safeguarding the student and the guardian must either be British citizens or hold settled status in the UK. Importantly, the guardian's details must now also be included in the CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) issued by the sponsoring school, enhancing transparency and accountability.

Additionally, the rules define acceptable living arrangements more explicitly, ranging from full boarding at residential schools, weekly boarding with weekend guardians, to independent living arrangements permitted only for older students aged 16 or 17.

As of the 9th of April 2025, application fees also increased. The Child Student visa application fee rose to £524, while the CAS issuance fee is set at £55.

Collectively, these measures reflect the ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety, welfare, and appropriate support of young international students who choose the UK as their education destination.

At Holmes & Partners Ltd., we offer professional immigration and visa services tailored to your needs. Our expert team provides end-to-end support throughout the visa application process—from Student and Graduate Visas to UK Visitor and Skilled Worker Visas. We also assist with sponsor licence applications and ongoing compliance management. For schools and colleges, we offer a fully outsourced sponsor licence and visa support service that is designed to be cost-neutral, easing the administrative burden while ensuring full UKVI compliance.

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EVENTS COMING UP IN 2025

FOOTBALL

U11 Girls - Saint Nicholas - 11 June
U13 Girls - Lingfield College - 6 May

TRIATHLON

U9-U18 - Ipswich High School - 2 May

TENNIS

U13 - New Hall School - 14 May
U15 - New Hall School - 15 May

TOUCH RUGBY

U13/U15 - Maidenhead RFC - 10 June

GYMNASTICS

U9/U11 - Adcote School - 11 May

EQUESTRIAN

U9-U18 - Princethorpe College - 24 & 25 May

CRICKET

U13 Girls - Gosfield School - 3 June
U15 Boys - St James Boys', Ashford - 11 June
U13 Boys - St James Boys', Ashford - 12 June
U15 Girls - Gosfield School - 17 June
U18 Girls & Boys - Gosfield School - 19 June

GOLF

U18 - Worksop College - 19 June

ATHLETICS FINALS

U9-U18 - Alexander Stadium - 16 June

INCLUSIVE FESTIVAL WITH POWER2INSPIRE

U12/U13 - Leighton Park School - 17 June
U11-U14 - Finborough School - 2 May

INCLUSIVE FESTIVAL OF SPORT 2025

U11+ - University of Nottingham - 24 & 25 June

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Instagram @isaschoolssport for more
updates.

X ISASPORTUK

IG ISASCHOOLSSPORT

ISA National Cross Country Finals 2025

The National Cross Country Finals 2025 took place at a new venue in Mallory Park, Leicestershire, featuring a tough, undulating course. The event hosted 674 pupils from 163 member schools. Staff and students from a local school assisted with course setup and marshalling. Well done to all students for their efforts on the day.



St Christopher's and Bridgewater schools triumph at Esports Finals

The first-ever ISA Esports Finals were held at Lycée International de Londres in partnership with DAIGON Esports, quickly becoming a popular and inclusive event on the calendar. The competition encourages students from diverse backgrounds and abilities to showcase their skills in a supportive environment. Finalists included St Christopher's Prep School, Littlegarth School, Scarisbrick Hall School, Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate, Southbank International School, Bridgewater School, Hulme Grammar School, Abbey College Cambridge, and Lycée International de Londres Winston Churchill. St Christopher's Prep School won the Minecraft competition, while Bridgewater School took the Rocket League title. The top four teams in each game earned places at the Esports World Championships in Malta this October.

Para Events

Para opportunities are available for some of our larger events, such as athletics, swimming, and triathlon. You can always discuss the options available for your students with the ISA Sport team.

ISA | SPORT Roundup

AREA SPORTS COORDINATORS

EAST ANGLIA

Marc Holland | Woodlands School, Hutton Manor

LONDON NORTH

Sophie Martin | Knightsbridge School

LONDON SOUTH

TBC

LONDON WEST

Kevin Long | Boundary Oak School

MIDLANDS

Sarah Dicksee | Dixie Grammar School
Neil McCollin | Princethorpe College

NORTH

Nick McMahon | Hipperholme Grammar

SOUTH WEST

Richard Thomas | Bournemouth Collegiate
David Tomlinson | Bournemouth Collegiate

ISA Sport is committed to providing equal sporting opportunity for all pupils at Members' schools, and 2024/2025 builds on the launch of inclusive events last year. Inclusivity is at the heart of our Association, and we are working closely with valuable partners such as Power2Inspire and the University of Nottingham to grow the inclusive offer for students in your schools.

ISA hopes that positive experiences in such events provide the platform to build confidence and social interaction. Find out about some of this year's opportunities below.

Power2Inspire Sports Festival

Year 7 and 8 students receiving SEND support can join us and Power2Inspire for an inclusive sports event at Leighton Park School or Finborough School. In its third year, the event will include sports such as Boccia, Goalball, Kwik Cricket and sitting volleyball. All pupils will come away with t-shirts, medals and certificates for taking part.

Tuesday 17 June 2025, Leighton Park School. Find out more details and register here: <https://www.isaschools.org.uk/sport/inclusive-sport/inclusive-festival-with-power2inspire.html>

Inclusive Festival of Sport (Residential)

The ISA Inclusive Festival of Sport returns for 2025. Once again, this will take place at the University of Nottingham, with the support of their inclusive delivery team. For year 6+ students, this is a residential two-day festival that offers adapted sports in a non-competitive environment, including all meals and accommodation. Last year students enjoyed a variety of sporting activities including archery, climbing, and wheelchair basketball, and new activities are in store for 2025.

The ISA Inclusive Festival of Sport

Find out more information here: <https://www.isaschools.org.uk/sport/inclusive-sport/inclusive-festival-of-sport.html>

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ISASCHOOLSSPORT



THE PERFORMING ARTS TEAM FROM CLAREMONT

Creative synergy: How teamwork elevates achievement

Sarah Cakebread, Director of Performing Arts



Over my years of leading Performing Arts departments in schools, I have often looked at the external training courses on offer that promise to help a department 'thrive' and I have wondered just how they teach such intimate wisdom in only 7 hours, with time for a buffet lunch and an early finish if you forgo the Q&A! Of course, I am being flippant and I am sure these courses do have plenty of methods

that will support the academic lift of a department or the planning within the Performing Arts in a school - which are most definitely, essential parts of the overall success. However, the thing that I feel they neglect is that essentially when we are running any department within a school, we are dealing with a huge range of human beings, with relationships, emotions, desires, varying capabilities, work ethics, experiences... the list goes on. I believe, from my understanding of working in the Performing Arts within schools for the last 20 years, that prioritising honest, clear communication on every single level is the key to success anywhere and success in creating an environment in which everyone can thrive. At Claremont Performing Arts, we take immense pride in supporting our students in all aspects of their time with us - academically and practically.

Beth Eckhoff, Head of Dance and Rambert specialist



I believe our roots in success come from the bespoke planning we do when responding to how we achieve success for each individual. Once an individual's plan is in place, we work collaboratively to marry up our skills so they align for the best possible outcome. A student might show determination, raw talent, outstanding technique, a huge amount of unwieldy creativity, and then it is up to us to harness, fine-tune, grow, support and nurture what they have using the skills, expertise and

experience from all of us as practitioners. Our best achievements with our students have never come from working in isolation from each other - what works for us is the ability to speak freely, expressing our concerns and our praise for students, which then feeds into the 'developing pot' that we consider for each individual. We then redirect our approach as a team, and the progress of students is maximised.

A key area in which we support our students is in taking their next steps toward professional training. In the last couple of years, one of the ways we do this is by offering expert guidance through the self-tape audition process, a vital component of applying to accredited drama schools and conservatoires. Our staff, all of whom come from professional performance backgrounds or have been performance-

trained themselves, bring real-world insight and experience to the process, helping students prepare with confidence. Our team nurtures each student's unique strengths in acting, singing, and dance, combining creative coaching with access to high-tech equipment and professional post-production software. Students are then able to submit audition tapes that they feel proud of, showcasing their talent in the best possible light:

Lucy Skinner, Drama and English Teacher and Digital Audition specialist



Tailored support has helped our students to thrive, giving them the confidence to present their strongest selves to the industry's leading institutions. Recent success stories include offers from prestigious schools such as Mountview, ArtsEd, Bird College, RADA and the National Youth Theatre. I think what makes us so strong in terms of collaboration and ultimately the best outcomes for our students is that we have this ability to be dynamic with our ideas and

the students' ideas; nothing is ever set in stone, apart from the level of discipline and approach to projects. Why we all work so well together is that we bounce off each other, alter and enhance each other's work to the point where there is never a limit on what the students achieve. We encourage students to be positively ruthless with work, as sometimes this can open doors to other new ways that work better for them and the project. We always consider where each student is going to thrive and take it from there. In the time that I've been working with the Performing Arts at Claremont, what I've seen is that every year is different in terms of the creative journey that the students go on, regardless of the curriculum. That's what makes it so exciting to be in this department, as there is room for that growth all the time for the teacher and the pupils.

Within the Performing Arts Department at Claremont, I get the satisfaction of working daily with excellent colleagues - we have created a way of working that capitalises on the skills and qualities of each person within the team - an excellent Performing Arts team needs a variety of strengths and characters, which allows our reach to be far broader for those we teach. Optimism is most definitely our *modus operandi*:

Claire Waller, Drama Teacher and LAMDA* specialist



I have never worked in an environment where I feel so valued, and I think that we all feel that. We all feel valued, and so by the same token, do our students. We, as a creative team, have the same ideas of excellence, the expectation that our students will come with us on any journey we embark on - be that a show, an exam, or a lesson. They trust us. We bounce ideas off each other, we are not precious, we can laugh at ourselves, we don't have all the

answers and ultimately we are on a journey alongside our students - it is why they leave us feeling empowered and we are left feeling proud and buoyant for the next leg of the journey. I look forward to coming to work, everyday - that must say something about the Performing Arts department at Claremont!

*London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art

Invariably, every performance exam subject also has a large component of written work, and so there are times when we can be guilty of having our blinkers on and thinking only our one art form exists - at this point, we have to be reminded what serves our Performing Arts students best. When students feel the cohesion between the discrete disciplines, I believe they feel safer than ever to 'have a go'.

Rebecca Ellefsen, Music Teacher and specialist in French Horn and Piano



The school has recently introduced Year 9 collaborative Learning Extension Programmes (LEP) in a range of key areas of interest. Getting our youngest students to work in this way led to a standout feature of the 2025 Public Dance Showcase - 'It's Your Move'. Each pupil had strengths in the Performing Arts, but this was the first opportunity at Claremont for them to put them all together on stage. Pupils were surprised that singing or dancing, or acting, wasn't as

scary as they first thought, and that support from their peers made them feel less self-conscious in trying out a new discipline. Our challenge for our Year 9 LEP group was to make them shine in all the areas on stage, rather than just their favourite. Even the most reluctant performers in the group were giving it their best by the end - they didn't want to let anyone else down, they were part of the Year 9 LEP, and that was important. It was fun to work with our youngest students and to succeed in something together. This early sense of team achievement will continue to have positive repercussions throughout the students' time at Claremont.

If we do not guard against it, schools have the potential to be infantilising places for adults to work. Teachers often talk about 'their Headteacher' rather than 'the Headteacher' or that they daren't do things in a new way because they will 'get told off' rather than presenting a case for common sense and innovation to colleagues. In the Performing Arts at Claremont, we do all we can to limit this type of rhetoric because it kills creativity, individuality and limits satisfying progress. Instead, we talk to each other, lots, we talk about ideas, students, concerns, solutions, speaking up about our experiences, and we actively seek opportunities to work together:

Natasha Smith, Head of Music/Music Tech and Head of the Creative Faculty



The thing I've found amazing about working as part of the Performing Arts Department at Claremont is that we bring out the best in each other as teachers. We aren't afraid to change and challenge things - not always on a large scale, but always challenging, and supporting change where it is needed to help our students flourish. We know as practitioners in our specialisms we still have so much to learn from each other, and our students see us freely wander in and out of each other's

lessons and add thoughts, direction, tips, ideas in a way that is entirely welcome and invariably always really useful. We are not idealistic, but instead we are transparent in aiming high whilst acknowledging the sheer volume each of us has to do to meet the criteria within our courses. I would say that being open to honest and possibly difficult conversations with colleagues is the way we have maintained continued success as a Performing Arts team, and how trust has been engendered in the relationships we have with our students.

In conclusion, to run a successful Performing Arts Department within a school, I believe you need the following:

- clear, progressive and consistent high standards
- team players with excellent initiative
- diligent, committed practitioners
- honest communication
- a sense of fun and daring
- a steely determination
- an ability to be passionate but not precious

At Claremont, our ambitions within the Performing Arts remain high no matter what the project. I believe that the dynamic energy we create as a team, alongside our students, stays with us for years to come.

ISA Awards 2024 Case Study

Outstanding Sport, Small School

Maple Walk School was founded in 2004 by the New Model School Company with a philanthropic aim to provide an excellent yet affordable preparatory education. Starting in a sports hall in Northwest London, it moved in 2010 to a purpose-built, eco-friendly campus near Roundwood Park, supported by The Craigmyle Charitable Trust. Despite limited onsite sports facilities, the school prioritises sport for physical fitness and character development by using local parks, community centres, and partnerships with nearby schools. Over time, Maple Walk has developed an inclusive sporting ethos focused on participation and excellence, strengthened by strong relationships with local schools, independent clubs, and borough-wide initiatives to ensure a comprehensive sporting experience for all pupils regardless of background or ability.



Aims

The School's sporting ethos is built on four key pillars: participation, excellence, inclusivity, and innovation. The school strongly believes that every child should have access to high-quality sports opportunities, regardless of their athletic ability. To achieve this, Maple Walk has developed a comprehensive and multi-faceted sports programme that caters to all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6.

Maximising Participation

Maple Walk ensures that every student gets a chance to engage in sport, whether through morning and after-school clubs, inter-house competitions, or borough-wide tournaments. The goal is to build confidence, resilience, and a love for physical activity that students will carry with them into adulthood. By introducing the role of Sports Lead into Year 6, they have ensured that pupils have an effective input into the sports provision and competition choice.

Striving for Excellence

While inclusivity is a core value, the school also supports students with exceptional sporting potential. Pupils with strong abilities are encouraged to compete at a higher level, whether in Brent Borough teams, national competitions, or elite academies. The school works with professional clubs and external coaches to identify and develop talented athletes.

Inclusive Sporting Opportunities

Maple Walk is committed to breaking down barriers to sport. The school has introduced disability sports, mixed-gender teams, and targeted initiatives to encourage greater female participation in sports such as football. The six-week inclusive sports programme ensures that students of all abilities can take part in adapted activities like Boccia, seated volleyball, and goalball. This approach has led to these inclusive sports being played across the borough at inter-school events, reflecting Maple Walk's ethos of innovation and inclusivity in providing 'Sport for All'.

Innovative Use of Local Facilities

Given its limited on-site resources, Maple Walk has developed strong partnerships with local sports facilities. The school uses Roundwood Park for football, rugby, and running, Willesden Sports

Centre for athletics and swimming, and St Claudine's courts for girls' and boys' football. These partnerships maximise the sporting opportunities available to students, ensuring they receive the same quality of experience as pupils at schools with larger campuses.

Outcomes

The commitment to high-quality, inclusive, and competitive sport has delivered remarkable results, both in terms of individual success stories and broader school-wide achievements. The school has developed a strong reputation in local and national sport competitions. 2024 highlights included:

Football

Three pupils represented the Brent U11 football team in regional tournaments, showcasing their skills on behalf of the borough. Additionally, a former Maple Walk pupil has advanced to the Arsenal Academy, highlighting the school's success in nurturing football talent.

Athletics

A Year 6 student won gold in the Brent 60m breaststroke championship, while another secured first place in the 80m sprint at the Brent Athletics Championships, competing against 15 other schools. Five students also qualified for the ISA Cross Country National Championships, reflecting the school's strong endurance training program.

Multi-Sport Competitions

Forty pupils took part in the Mill Hill Schools Triathlon, one of the UK's largest school sporting charity events, raising over £4,500 to support the local charity Little Village.

Inclusivity and Innovation in Sport

The school's commitment to inclusive sports has transformed student engagement: disability sports now enable pupils with additional needs to compete in adapted games, building confidence and teamwork. Girls' football has expanded from just four players to a full squad of 20, reflecting a dramatic rise in participation. The school's advocacy has also influenced the Brent School Partnership to include adapted sports in inter-school competitions, broadening access for all students.

Community and Partnerships

The school's collaborative approach to sports has strengthened ties with local and regional organisations by hosting regular football fixtures with The Lyceum School in Regent's Park and competing against a diverse range of independent and state schools, providing students with varied and competitive sporting experiences.



Case study contributors:

Claire Murdoch,
Headteacher

Arturo Derqui,
Head of Sport



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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

NEW MEMBERS

Begdale House School	Jo Murray	East
Ryes College	Daniel Lawrence	East
Westfield House	Jo Murray	East
Islamia School for Girls	Amzad Ali	London North
Break Through School	Ruth Elliott	London South
Burlington House Tooting	Paul Jones	London South
Elmley Dray	Emily Hollis	London South
Minerva's Virtual Academy	Suzanne Lindley	London South
Caelum House School	Ruth Glynne-Owen	London West
Sikh Heritage Girls School	Divinder Kaur Ghundale	London West
Unity College	Louise Reeks	London West
Great Oaks College	Sharon Cliff	Midlands
Heckington House	Kimberley Albelda	Midlands
New Ways School	Michelle Woodward	Midlands
Robins Nest School	Sharon Cliff	Midlands
Snowhill School	Andrew McCreedy	Midlands
South Park Enterprise College	Mark Panting	Midlands
Impact North West Schools	Jayne Jones	North
Open Air Education	Hannah Atkinson	North
Peregrinate School	Angela Mollan	North
Westbourne School, Sheffield	Aidan Edmanson	North
Broadwood School	Natalie Callahan	North
Castle Hill School	Andrew McCreedy	North
Denby Grange School	Jennie Allport	North
Highcroft School	David Laheney	North
Liverpool Progressive School	Anthony Saleh	North
Moorlands View School, Barnsley	David Joy	North
Northbridge Enterprise College	Emma White	North
Park House School, Barnsley	Jennie Allport	North
Rivacre Brook School	Caroline McPoland	North
Tees Valley College	Pete Ewart	North
The Grange School, Ossett	Jennie Allport	North
Three Bridges	Lisa Smith	South West
Somerset Progressive School	Karl Templeman	South West

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

TRANSFERS OF MEMBERSHIP

Brookes UK	Paul Jackson	East
Octavia House Schools, Essex	Patrik Foster	East
Red Balloon Centre, Cambridge	Jessica Lechner	East
Abbot's Hill School	Sharon Schanschieff	London North
Heathside School, Hampstead	Sara William-Ryan	London North
Mulberry House School	Erika Billmore	London North
The Southover Partnership	Angela Moore	London North
ACS Cobham International School	Rob Crowther	London West
Instituto Espanol Canada Blanch	Justina Castillo Garcia	London West
La Petite Ecole Francaise	Camie Steuer	London West
Rookwood School	Paul Robinson	London West
The New Forest Small School	Alex James	London West
Yarrow Heights School	Liam Gaster	London West
Chase Grammar School	Moiria Simpson	Midlands
Alderley Edge School	Caroline Wood	North
Brabyns Preparatory School	Catherine Carrasco	North
Christian Fellowship School	Garrie-John Barnes	North
Edenfield Girls High School	Yaasmin Mubarak	North
Pivot Academy Kirklees	Katie Lockwood	North
Leehurst Swan	Clive Marriott	South West
Moyles Court	Craig Wardle	South West

ISA | Awards

ISA Members are invited to enter the annual ISA Awards, which celebrate success in our Members' schools. The Awards allow you to promote your achievements to both existing and prospective parents, and the wider community.

The 2025 Awards are now open for submissions. The deadline for entries is Friday 25 July 2025

All finalists will be announced in September. Winners are celebrated at our Awards Ceremony at the Autumn Study Conference in November; they will benefit from a dedicated trophy, certificate and publicity through the ISA network. The three highly commended entries per category will also receive a certificate and logo to use for their marketing.

ISA Awards winners embody excellence and innovation. Celebrated schools are recognised for their commitment to nurturing young minds, and their reflection of the diverse talents of our association.

For associated companies: there are also opportunities to sponsor our 2025 Awards. Please contact courses@isaschools.org.uk for more information.

You can now view judges' comments from 2024, as well as the criteria, rules, and entry form on our website.

2024 Winners

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Early Years

Little Downsend School

ISA Junior School of the Year Award

Fulham Pre-Prep

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ISA Senior School of the Year Award

The Faculty at Queen Ethelburga's

Sponsored by apetito



ISA SEND School of the Year Award

The Holmewood School

ISA Boarding School of the Year Award

Cardiff Sixth Form College

ISA Award for Outstanding Sport (Small School)

Maple Walk School

ISA Award for Outstanding Sport (Large School)

Gosfield School

ISA Award for Excellence in Performing Arts

ArtsEd

ISA Award for Excellence in Fine Art and Design

Faraday School

ISA Award for Outstanding Engagement in the Community

Quinton House School

ISA Award for Future Readiness

Leighton Park School

Sponsored by School Fee Plan



ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Rosemead Preparatory School

ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in Mental Health and Wellbeing

Slindon College

ISA Award for Excellence in Sustainability

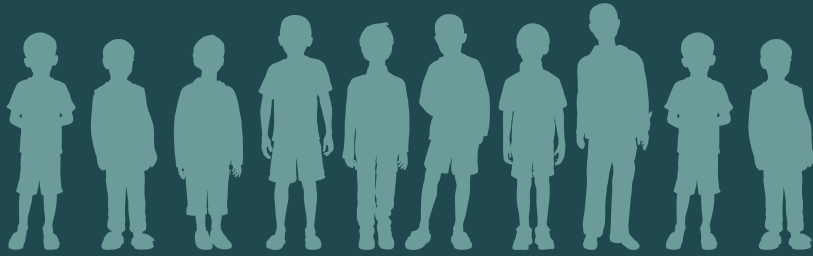
Liberty Woodland School

ISA Award for Innovation in Independent Education

Westbourne School

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ANDREW HAMPTON

Working with Boys

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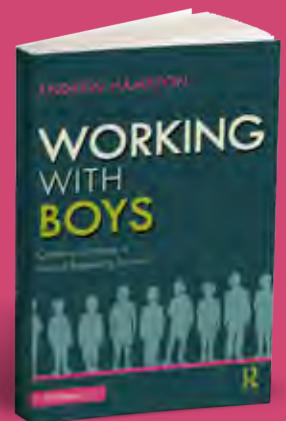
Working with Boys is a whole-school, iterative programme of study that uses guided reflection to empower boys to self-regulate their attitudes and behaviour and be the best they can be. The programme has a proven track record of supporting boys to be consistently principled, honourable, noble, trustworthy, upright and dignified.

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