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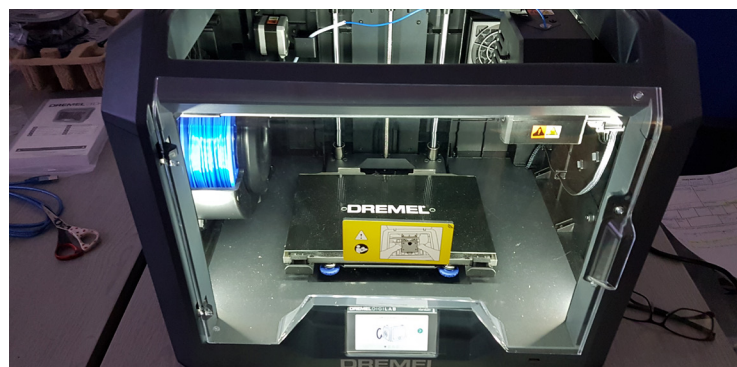
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WELCOME

to the latest edition of
QA Education magazine



A big hello...

As I join the team at QA Education this spring, a time of new growth and fresh beginnings, I welcome along readers both regular and new. As a journalist with a stint in primary teaching, I have experienced first-hand the issues facing schools and it gives me great pleasure to bring to you the latest in education news, resources and opinion pieces. Following the recent change in education secretary, Emma Hollis has some advice for Damian Hinds on page 8 as she discusses teacher training, recruitment and retention in her role as the executive director of NASBTT. She says there is no magic wand to fix the workload pressures faced by staff – but offers some insight into how a culture shift can happen if schools work alongside the Government and if funding is allocated smartly. Perhaps my favourite stories are those which promise to really make a long-lasting difference to young futures. On these pages (4 and 5) we look at how some inspirational experiences are changing

the future paths of disadvantaged pupils. Future First, Lenovo and Clugston are three very different groups offering youngsters the chance to see beyond their daily lives. Speaking of inspiration, the QA Education office was transformed into a creatively driven production plant when Dremel's 3D printer arrived on loan. See our review on pages 6 and 7 to see how your school could use the world-changing technology. And with STEM subjects being a major Government focus due to a difficulty in recruiting professionals, we feature on page 72 some of the most motivating resources and events out there this spring. If you, like me, are intrigued by the title Gastronaut and the Quantum Mechanical Chocolate Factory, read on! Funding is always a worry for schools, especially at this time of year. But there are options out there to help schools save – and generate – cash. On pages 10 and 11 we speak to some experts who will give even the most budget-savvy heads a run for their money. See qaeducation.co.uk to read in full about some of the features in this issue and get in touch with your thoughts, via editorial@euromediaal.com, Twitter – @qaeducation – or Facebook, where there is also the chance to win a bottle of Champagne if you leave a Facebook review. Good luck!

Victoria Galligan, Editor

Inspiration to shape a generation

Struggling to motivate pupils? Take a look at how school alumni, construction teams and virtual reality are fuelling young imaginations...



Andrew Owens, Greenergy Chief Executive, says, "At Greenergy we employ over 800 people in a range of roles; from IT professionals, engineers, graphic designers to logistics personnel and truck drivers. By giving students an insight into how our business works, we hope to demonstrate the range of opportunities available in the industry."

The prospect of embarking on a career can be daunting for teens – many look up to family members, friends and teachers and plan to follow in their footsteps in some way. But for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, career role models can be in short supply. Enter national education charity Future First, which works to break down barriers caused by social mobility issues. One recent project with Future First involved pupils being offered the chance to take part in a nationwide programme to demonstrate the breadth of jobs available in the energy industry. The charity has partnered with Greenergy, the UK's leading road fuel supplier and Europe's largest manufacturer of biofuel from waste, to show pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds the skills necessary to succeed in the energy and fuel industry. Students from Years 10, 11 and 12 with an interest in maths, technology and sciences are taken to Greenergy's fuel terminals and biofuel manufacturing plants on site tours, taking part in talks with apprentices and site management about their own career pathways.

Future First research shows almost half of young people receiving Free School Meals don't know anyone in a job they would like to do and that three quarters of them don't believe that they can be successful. Future First's recently appointed CEO Matt Lent (pictured) explained to QA Education the many other ways in which the charity are delivering opportunities to young people to boost their confidence and raise aspirations, by tackling issues around social mobility. He says, "We have so far helped more than a thousand state secondary schools and colleges across the country to engage their community of former students to improve the motivation, confidence and life chances of the current generation. "Former students have a wealth of talent and experience, which private schools and universities have always harnessed. Future First makes it easy for state schools or colleges to do the same. "Giving young people relatable role models, who have sat in the same seats as them, is an

extraordinarily powerful way to raise all students' aspirations, and open up a world of possibilities to which they would not otherwise have access.

"Many former students return for assemblies and interactive workshops to talk to current students about their career paths and the skills they will need to succeed in work. These skills are not often taught in the curriculum. There are also lots of examples of alumni providing a wide range of workplace visits and work experience opportunities, and some even become school governors. But in reality there are no limits to how alumni can support current students.

"For example, an alumnus working in the Netherlands joined her old geography class, at Tiverton High School in Devon, by Skype to talk about international labour markets. And a games designer joined a computing class in his old school, Oathall Community College in West Sussex, to help students see a connection between their school work today and employment opportunities when they are older.

"Many also act as mentors, such as at Chilton Trinity School, Somerset, where a paraplegic former student mentored a disabled Year 8 student. Another alumnus who worked in landscaping built a peaceful study garden for students at his old school. One school even used alumni donations to fund university trips for students." Matt adds that Future First have a committed team who work with hundreds of schools all around the country, and with tens of thousands of alumni and young people. He continues, "We know the amazing value that effective alumni networks can bring to a school and its pupils. Increasingly schools are realising that embedding this within the day-to-day school life is really helping their students, as well as supporting the school to meet the statutory careers guidance and Gatsby Benchmarks.

"We are starting to see the growth of a real nationwide movement as more and more schools come on board. We see a future where every single state school in the UK is able to tap into the amazing resource of former students, providing the social capital that all young people need to succeed, but particularly for those with the most challenges to overcome. "We have also just started to extend our work into primary schools, as we know that the earlier we engage young people in thinking about their career options and meeting positive role-models, the bigger the impact we can have. "Research shows that young people who have four or more encounters with the world of work while in education are 86% less likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) and on average will go on to earn 18% more than peers who didn't have such opportunities. "We need to ensure that every young person in the country, but particularly those from areas of low social mobility and deprivation, have the opportunity to meet and interact with employers and employees. This will help to broaden their horizons, raise aspirations, and allow them see the relevance of their education.

"Every young person deserves to have trusted and caring adults in their life, other than their parents or teachers. Someone who will encourage and support them without agenda or judgement, someone who they can relate to and who will motivate them to be the best they can be. We need national policy that makes it easier for schools, and others who work directly with young people, to focus on building these networks, tapping into existing resources, and helping young people develop the vital employability skills they will need, including confidence, communication, resilience and motivation."

• For more information on Future First, see futurefirst.org.uk

When building work takes place in schools and colleges, construction frameworks ensure the procurement and delivery of the projects – bringing together clients, contractors, designers and now even students!

Clugston Construction marketing director Paul Goulard describes a recent development using the YORbuild2 framework, which covers education projects within Yorkshire, Humber, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and the North East. Paul says, "Increasingly, such frameworks are being employed by educational establishments to incentivise contractors to support social value initiatives. What this means is that public bodies are looking for contractors to not only deliver projects,



but also support local supply chains and learning and skills programmes within schools and colleges."

When working with other contractors on Leeds College of Building's new £13m campus development, Clugston saw an opportunity. Paul said, "Clugston is also adding value by supporting the college's students and organising visits to other construction sites and technical presentations on subjects such as building services and health and safety planning."



As technology becomes ingrained in day-to-day lessons, teachers feel that the next step in ICT – virtual reality – will benefit learning. According to global technology group Lenovo (HKSE: 992) (ADR: LNVGY), 94% of teachers can see how lessons can be enhanced. A huge 84% of teachers predict that future jobs will be heavily influenced by tech and, although only a quarter of teachers have used VR in the classroom thus far, 97% of these found that it made for more engaged students. Of the teachers surveyed, over a third admitted that they have struggled to make

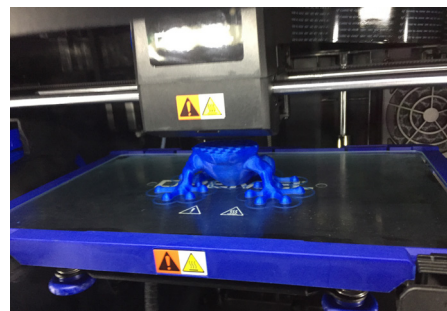
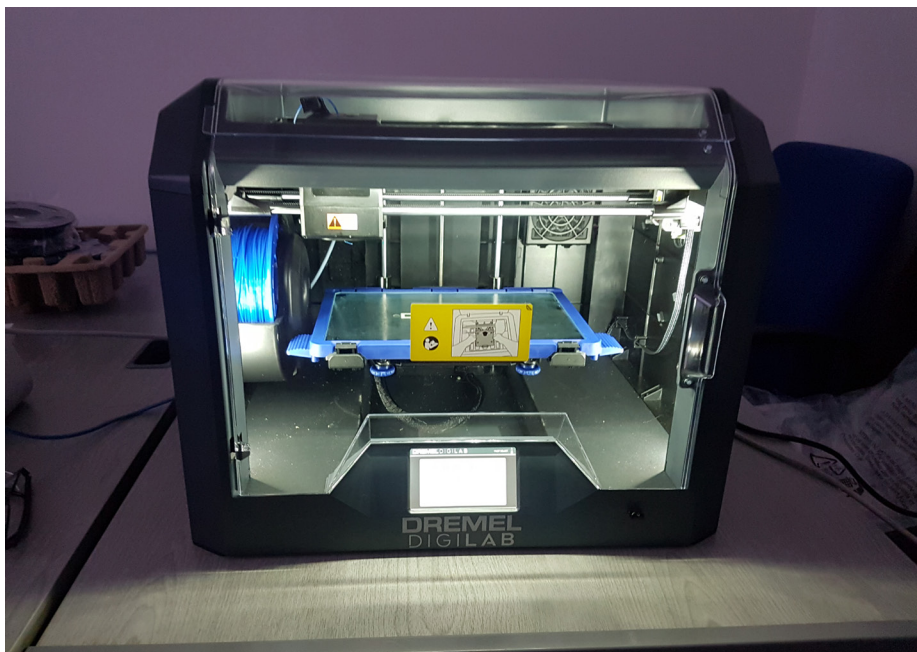
topics real and relatable when their students have not experienced them previously. Of all the wide-ranging uses of VR, teachers would most want to take students to explore new worlds – like climbing to the top of Everest, seeing moments in history like the D-Day Beaches during WW2 or exploring wildlife and the natural world.

In addition, 55% of teachers believe that VR will see an up-turn in grades as pupils become more inspired by topics.

Rich Henderson, director of global education solutions at Lenovo, commented, "Students are no longer bound by classroom walls and teachers are no longer bound by traditional lesson plans. There's a whole new range of experiences for students to take inspiration from. It's time to embrace this technology and give teachers the tools they need to inspire the workforce of tomorrow."

DREMEL'S 3D PRINTER IS SCHOOL FRIENDLY!

We review the latest in DT equipment, checking out software, preparation and the scope for students



SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE DREMEL DIGILAB 3D45

Maximum resolution	50 µm (0.05 mm)
Maximum print size (l x w x h)	25.5 x 15.5 x 17.0 cm
Data transfer	USB, Wifi, Ethernet
Dimensions (l x w x h)	39.4 x 51.5 x 40.6 cm
Weight (excluding filament)	19.4 kg
Scope of delivery/ Recommended retail price excluding VAT	• Device with black Eco-ABS filament, black nylon filament, USB cable, USB stick, "Dremel DigiLab 3D Slicer" software, spatula object and glue stick: £1,499 • One filament spool for each type of filament: • PLA filament £35.99 • Eco-ABS filament £41.99 • Nylon filament £47.50

With 3D printing making a splash in industry, schools are beginning to invest in the technology to help prepare students for future careers. But with the cost relatively high and the technology still emerging, is it worth handing over much-needed funding? Here, we review the Dremel DigiLab 3D45 model to explore whether 3D printing is a realistic avenue for schools to explore. Armed with a scraper and two sticks of purple glue, our tech-minded colleague **Frank McLaughlin** set up the DigiLab, which was generously loaned to us by Dremel (part of the Bosch group). Dremel launched their DigiLab 3D45 at the BETT show recently because it has been designed specifically for schools. Frank had a good knowledge of how 3D printing works – although he had never used a 3D printer before – and informed me that a spool of plastic

thread (or filament) was responsible for printing the 3D objects. So we loaded the spool into the side of the machine and threaded the filament into the correct parts. Dremel informed us that an environmentally friendly, plant-based plastic, PLA, can be used with the DigiLab.

Creating awe and wonder in DT

On reading the easy-to-follow, relatively short set of instructions, we set about choosing a design to build. The touch-screen menu allowed us to easily navigate to a frog model, which the printer informed us would take 1hr 30mins. We took the purple glue stick and lubricated the glass platform to avoid the object from being welded onto the plate. Over the next couple of hours, with the lights dimmed and the printer illuminated like some kind of plastic-melting UFO, staff from around the office bobbed in to express their awe and wonder. Thanks to its fully

enclosed see-through chamber, we could see every stage of creation as the hair-thin strands of melted plastic build up the shapes, layer by layer. With cries of "It's like magic!" and "What else can we make?" it's clear to see the excitement levels in schools will be piqued with a 3D printer. The possibilities are endless and the only limits are the students' imagination.

The end completion time was extended throughout printing, so the first job ran over our working day. Frog ended up remaining headless, however we were able to see the honeycomb effect within the body of the objects printed – which saves on filament and is fantastically strong. There's also an integrated camera so students and teachers can monitor and control multiple printers remotely.

Frank monitored the printing of the first object – while printing the machine should not be left unattended, something to consider when longer jobs are being built in school hours – and then began creating his own designs including a QA Education logo and a Euromedia heart keyring. As well as a few designs included with the printer to get you started, nets are available on the web if students want a quick start. Designing your own net can be done in a variety of software packages such as Autodesk's Print Studio.

Cross-curricular potential

After using the printer and discussing the possibility of creating various objects, we realised that a 3D printer can be fully cross-

curricular as well as improving DT and computing skills. Studying business? Make an object to sell at enterprise. Art student? Design your own decorative object. Future engineer? Solve a problem by building a solution.

Dremel are keen to impress how important it is that pupils have a good knowledge of 3D design and build. John Kavanagh, Dremel's global president, said, "3D printers have become an essential teaching tool as the world's economies gear to the needs of the next industrial revolution. The Dremel DigiLab suite provides the tools and range to inspire children and give them the skills they'll need for the workplace of the future. The DigiLab 3D45 is the first 3D printer designed to perfectly suit the school environment. It combines simplicity of use and reliability with the capacity to produce advanced designs at a price that schools can afford."

Michael Miller, technology and computer science teacher at Otsego Public Schools in the USA and a Dremel 3D Ambassador, said, "The integration of 3D printing into the classroom, from design and technology to history, inspires students. The Dremel DigiLab 3D printing product suite is perfect for introducing children to the basics of 3D design and printing, and enabling them to develop their skills from starting school to heading to university. 3D printing is a great way to close the disconnect between the skills we teach in the classroom and the world of work."

OUR IN-DEPTH REVIEW...

Here, Frank gives his technical review and suggests how the 3D printer can be operated in DT lessons:

• **SET-UP SPEED:**

To set the DigiLab takes hardly any time at all. It is built for easy usage, all of it is pretty much self-explanatory.

• **EASE OF USE:**

The printer is almost plug in and print. It's so easy to use, you just add the filament, hook the filament to the extruder, calibrate the glass platform (which is literally pressing a button) and you are good to go.

• **TIME:**

The DigiLab takes around five minutes to heat up before it can begin sculpting. The clock is not always dependable with sculptures sometimes taking up to an extra hour longer than expected. Despite the guesstimates the DigiLab's speed, for what it prints, is impressive.

• **DISPLAY:**

The DigiLab utilises a clear and user-friendly interactive touch screen to display how long the sculptures will take to create. It also shows the temperature of the glass platform as well as the temperature of the nozzle.

• **NOISE:**

The machine is quite loud, as can be expected of a 3D printer, so may need to be sited away from pupils' desks.

• **SOFTWARE:**

Works best with recommended files .g3drem and these can be created with relative ease with the Autodesk Print Studio. Just drop your STL file design in, and follow the simple instruction menu (import, layout, repair, supports, preview and finally export).

• **DESIGN:**

Autodesk Print Studio's lack of creative features makes it easy

to use, although positioning nets can be difficult when changing dimensions. Try using Maya or Blender to create your models, then import them to Autodesk. Once you've created or downloaded a file you can add it to the memory stick provided (make sure to use the g3drem file exported from Autodesk as opposed to the .3ps file), plug the memory stick into the front of the DigiLab, find your file and click print.

• **PREPARING THE PRINTER:**

Use a lot of purple glue! No matter how much purple glue is used, it doesn't seem to be enough as it can be difficult to remove the sculptures from the glass sheet using the scraper provided.

• **COST OF PRODUCTION:**

Many models use a honeycomb structure inside. This is mainly due to the cost effective and strength of the material. When uploading your models to Autodesk at the preview stage, the software lets you know how much filament it will cost to print the model as well as the duration of printing. A filament can be bought from around £35 and are available in a range of bright colours.

• **CONCLUSION:**

From beginning to end, using the Dremel is easy with little time needed to set up the machine. The model is extremely durable and not as heavy as anticipated. The quality and overall finish of the models is superb. There are no complicated parts or fragile elements and the Dremel is a sturdy, well-made piece of equipment – perhaps even pupil proof!

TEACHER TRAINING CRISIS:

NASBTT call for sustainable change in profession

Emma Hollis, executive director of the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT), talks to QA Education about the teacher recruitment crisis...

What is your background in education and how did you come to work at NASBTT?

"I was a career-changer who trained through school-based provision on the then graduate teacher programme. I taught primary (upper Key Stage 2) in three schools before taking over as Programme Manager for School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) provision at the Two Mile Ash School in Milton Keynes. I later became Head of Milton Keynes Teaching School Alliance alongside managing the SCITT. Whilst in these roles I was invited to sit on the NASBTT management board and had worked with them for 18 months in this capacity when then Executive Director Martin Thompson made the decision to retire. I applied for the job and formally took up the role last September."

What can heads and SLT do to make teaching a more manageable role?

"There is no magic wand to resolve workload issues and they are not uniform across schools – different schools and teachers face different challenges and pressures on their time. School leaders need to think carefully about any changes they are proposing and consider, as part of their assessments, the impact they will have on workload and teacher morale. Many schools, for example, are looking at their marking policies and considering when and where marking is most effective. Does marking done at a distance (the piles of books being carried home each night) actually have an impact on progress? If not, why is it being done and who is it being done for? There are some great examples of marking policies which have been replaced with feedback policies where feedback is done in the moment where it has the greatest impact on pupil progress. Schools can also look at the data they require teachers to collect and process and consider the value of what is being done. Can pupil progress be measured in more manageable ways? Is there any duplication of effort? What purpose is the data gathered for? Similarly, planning requirements can be streamlined with teachers encouraged to share practice and co-plan where that is appropriate for the children. Leaders can consider the format of planning and

whether they require plans to be submitted in a format which encourages the creation of paperwork for its own sake rather than for the progress of the children. Schemes of work and textbooks should be considered where these are of high quality and without formalising or imposing a specific structure on planning which limits individual teacher creativity and passion for their subject."

What can the Government do to reduce teacher workload and raise staff morale?

"The Department for Education has already published three useful reports on workload reduction and is continuing to work to ensure that the advice is put into practice. It takes time to change cultures and this will not happen overnight. Schools, teachers and the Government need to continue working together on making workload manageable. Just as importantly, Government can support this change in perceptions of the profession by: recognising that access to high-quality professional development for teaching staff, both in their early careers and throughout their working lives, should be an entitlement and not a lottery based on whether the school in which they happen to work values professional development; providing sufficient funding for schools to allow their staff the time the need to develop their knowledge and skills and become well-rounded, highly-educated and respected professionals; continuing to support the Chartered College of Teaching which is seeking to develop a Chartered Status for the profession; and, perhaps most importantly of all, committing to allowing sufficient lead-in time for policy changes to avoid uncertainty and confusion within the system. The key to sustainable change within the teaching profession is a period of stability which allows the profession to embed practices over time, without the need to react to constant change and upheaval."

A group of unions are calling for an immediate 5% pay rise for all teachers. Do you think this would help recruit and retain teachers and boost morale?

"Whilst research tells us that pay is not a deciding factor for teachers entering or leaving the profession, the ongoing public



sector pay caps do set a tone which devalues the profession and contributes to the negative perceptions which are impacting on recruitment and retention. Recognition, in the form of increased salaries, that teaching is a worthwhile and valuable profession would not solve the crisis overnight but it would be one factor which could help to turn the tide of negative opinion and begin to boost morale. We feel that there is further consideration to be given to the limit on progression for teachers who do not wish to enter a leadership role in schools. Effectively, pay for teachers who remain in the classroom is severely limited in comparison to those who chose to come out of the classroom into positions of senior leadership. At NASBTT, we would like to see career paths and salary progression which recognises the value of experience and expertise within the classroom, for those working directly with children and young people."

What advice would you give to a trainee teacher at the beginning of their career in schools?

"Remember this is a marathon, not a sprint! It can be tempting to see the end of your ITT year as the end-goal but the development of a professional takes years and the very best teachers see themselves as continually learning, no matter how long they've been in the classroom. Remember why you wanted to become a teacher in the first place. Write it down somewhere and look at it on those days when things feel tough. Keep a note of all those funny moments with the children, as well as the poignant ones, and keep these at the forefront of your mind. When faced with a long 'to-do' list, ask yourself – is this impacting on the children's learning or on my development? If not – is it vital that I do it? Finally, be kind to yourself. Take time to stop and breathe, spend time with friends and family and most importantly, take time just for you. If you burn out, you can't be the teacher the children need you to be. Looking after yourself is as much for them as it is for you."

- To stay informed of up-to-date policy developments, see nasbtt.org.uk



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BUDGETING SPECIAL

With money on your mind, how can you ensure you're getting the best value for money and generating income wherever possible? Here, our innovative contributors told editor **VICTORIA GALLIGAN** how schools could explore avenues from lucrative letting opportunities and to renewable energy solutions...

How to slash your ICT spending by 40%

An ICT expert has slashed spending at one trust by using reconditioned equipment.

Michael Vaughan is head of ICT at Inspiration Trust – a group of 14 academies across East Anglia. Twelve months ago, he was tasked with reducing the Trust's IT infrastructure spend by 40% across all 14 academies, no mean feat by any standard.

The Trust is responsible for all procurement for each school, including the purchase of equipment and resources the academies require to provide the best level of teaching to its students. This includes ICT provisions such as computer systems, servers, laptops and tablets which are vital to how students learn and progress at school.

Michael explains how he tackled the massive cuts in spending, saying, "First, I carried out an audit of all computer equipment across each school, so that I could develop a replacement strategy that was in line with the 40% reduction target. Based on the age and condition of all PCs across all schools, the estimated cost was £5million. I managed to reduce that potential spend by 20% from choosing

different technology providers and platforms.

"But the real game changer, which enabled me to reduce spend by another 20% to reach my 40% target, was working with Hardware Associates. They explained the benefits of investing in refurbished computer systems and how our Trust could save a lot of money on our IT infrastructure, without affecting the quality of the systems we provide to our staff and pupils."

The Trust purchased 200 desktops and laptops from Hardware Associates, paying 50% less on each unit. In total, this has saved the Trust a massive sum of £50,000. Refurbished computer systems are a great choice for schools working to extremely tight budgets, while trying to provide first rate technology to enable young people to reach their academic potential. Managing director at Hardware Associates Bill Champness said, "Many schools and colleges don't realise that reconditioned machines can be provided in exactly the same spec and model as they'd get direct from a vendor such as HP or Dell but at a much less cost. The machines we supply also come with a year-long warranty, and



post-purchase customer service, just like you'd get if you buy brand new."

The desktops and laptops have received great feedback from the 14 academies, who have praised the quality, design and performance of the refurbished computers systems.

"They look and feel brand new, and our staff and pupils have all been raving about them," added Michael. "Our investment has already paid off, saving us a huge amount of money as our budgets are increasingly squeezed. We cannot fault the systems, and still can't believe the like-for-like comparison between Hardware Associates' refurbished systems and the brand-new computers."

Generate income and improve local community cohesion by letting out your school

In the face of budget cuts and the ever-increasing costs of running a school, head teachers are finding themselves asking: "How can we generate more income?"

One advisor is helping schools to generate additional revenue – an average of £40k annually.

Chris Smith, head of letting specialist Kajima Community, works with hundreds of schools helping them to open up their facilities for community use. Chris said, "Schools facilities represent a vast and currently underutilised resource in the UK. Opening up school facilities for community use has considerable benefits both for the schools and the local communities; not only does it support school and community cohesion, it can

represent a potentially profitable revenue stream at a time of intense pressure on educational budgets."

Groups who use the facilities – such as slimming clubs, community associations and sports clubs, can bring the whole community together. Hard-to-reach parents, young adults and the elderly alike will be invited into schools and engage with the wider community.

It's understandable that some head teachers may be wary of inviting the general public into school but Chris adds that the financial benefits are invaluable, adding, "Some schools have questioned the opening up their premises to the community fearing associated costs, but the baseline cost is low. In fact, community use can prove to be a rich revenue stream

Is renewable energy the answer?

Mark Stevenson, Managing Director of Bright Spark Energy, advises how schools can cut back on their budget by using renewable energy options...

Small, proactive changes in energy use can actually be a great way for schools to save money, while larger investments can be a vital part of a longer-term sustainability strategy.

The smaller changes

Schools are often very environmentally conscious, especially when it comes to things such as green spaces and encouraging children to explore and respect the nature around them. Small changes made every day in the classroom can quickly add up and result in real savings. For example, if teachers turn off the lights, PCs and projectors between lessons and at the end of the day, this can save a substantial amount of money! Pupils could be assigned the role of 'light marshals' who have the responsibility to turn the lights off when classrooms are not used. Alternatively, get pupils to monitor classroom temperature as part of a lesson, enabling children to learn about science, finances and responsibility. Turning down the temperature in the classrooms a few degrees will save a lot over a long winter.

Another investment would be LED Lighting – often labelled “the future of lighting” due to the very small amount of energy it uses and its ability to last a long time, not to mention the positive impact to the quality of learning spaces. LED lighting uses up to 75% less energy and lasts up to 10x longer than traditional types of lighting. Funding models are available so there is upfront capital cost and it has the potential for long-term financial savings.

Larger investments

For schools that are thinking long-term, larger investments – such as switching to renewable energy options – can save the school money while also providing other substantial benefits to the environment and the classroom! Solar Photovoltaics (solar PV for short) is technology that features heavily in our lives, with homes as well as businesses and schools using solar PV to heat rooms. It has been often been viewed as an alternative to traditional methods like fossil fuels. In its simplest terms, it is a



technology that allows for daylight to be converted into electrical power. The Government highlighted within a 2012 report the benefits that solar PV can provide, including the ability to reduce Co2 emissions, reduce electricity bills and generate a financial surplus for schools once they have installed solar PV systems.

One school that we worked closely with, Beccles Primary Academy in Suffolk, managed to use their solar energy to power lunches! The Academy had upgraded their kitchens to use electric ovens but the electricity bills soared. Our team designed a solar installation to be the most efficient when the ovens were on, so solar power cooks the dinners now. It has been estimated that solar power will generate 53% of Academy electricity, reducing its reliance on grid-bought electricity.

Funding options

If schools are aiming to cut back on expenditure, it can be difficult to find the initial investment despite the obvious benefits it could bring. However, there are funding options available that aim to help schools invest in renewable energy, while also providing long-term protection against faulty or damaged equipment. For example, our funding partner Less Is More Capital provides schools with funding in order to generate a surplus, which can then be reinvested back into learning. The scheme estimates that for every £1 put into schools' renewable energy options, it will generate £3 to £4 in energy that can then be reinvested back into the schools. Schools can reap the financial and environmental benefits for years to come if they invest in renewable energy.

for schools, generating an average of £40k annually and some larger Greater London schools as much as £350k annually, which can be invested in new equipment, staffing or to offset existing budget deficits.”

A number of powerful proponents are currently lobbying for schools to be more open to the public. Sport England cites education sites as a key provider of sports facilities in England, owning over a third (39%) of all facilities: 77% of sports halls and 61% of artificial grass pitches are located on school, college and university sites.

And Chris has some words of wisdom should head teachers decide to take the plunge, advising, “The challenge when considering opening your school to the

public is to ensure that best practice is followed. Be clear with the client about what is and is not acceptable behaviour in the school and convey your expectations about how rooms should be left after use – users should not have the run of the whole school. This starts with a ‘show around’ ahead of any confirmed first booking. Provide a dedicated point of contact to rationalise the associated administration. Finally, consider putting in place a transparent online booking system which provides clear information about external users of the school including when and where they have booked, and for what function.”

Chris also poses the question that, given that the valuable facilities within schools have been paid for with public money, is it



Chris Smith, head of letting specialist Kajima Community

the case that schools have a civic duty to make those facilities available for public use?

Engage, inspire, and motivate

Sparkol's creative product suite for education provides fun software built for students and teachers.

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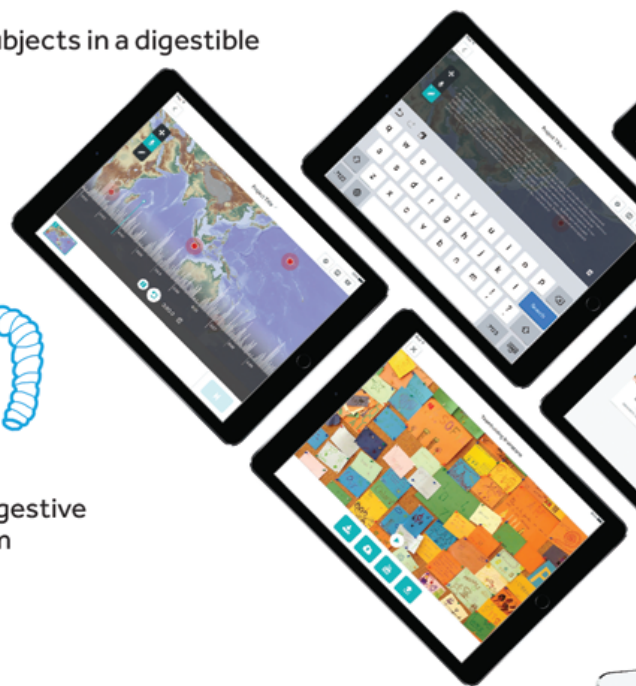
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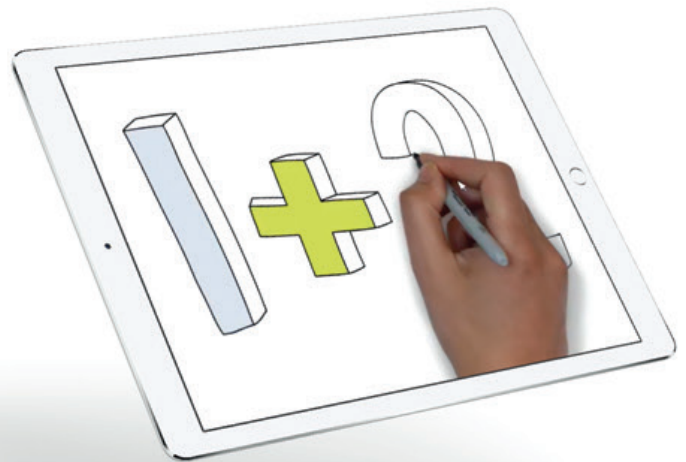
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VideoScribe is the world's leading whiteboard explainer video software from Sparkol.

Choose from a library of images and watch as a scribing hand draws your story. Easily add voiceovers and music and share your creation with students, colleagues and classmates!

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Explore the key themes of Shakespeare's Macbeth



Present lesson objectives



Explain chemical reactions



15%

Explainer videos increase information retention by 15% compared with talking head videos

www.storypix.co.uk

www.videoscribe.co

How SchoolScreener EZ® can help you assess your students' vision

Specsavers has teamed up with Thomson Screening to make the SchoolScreener EZ® tool available to every school in the country, free of charge.



Dr Josie Forte from Specsavers' Plymouth store explains how the software can be used to check children's eyesight.

What is SchoolScreener EZ®?

SchoolScreener EZ® is easy-to-use software designed to be operated by teachers, teaching assistants and even volunteers to quickly assess whether poor vision may be affecting a student's learning. The software enables an assessment of a child's vision to be simply made in school and is recommended for use from age 7-18 as children progress through school.

How does the process work?

Once the vision check has been performed, the software quickly calculates the results and immediately identifies potential problems with a child's eyesight. It then automatically generates a report, which will be sent home to the child's parents or carers to let them know what the best next step would be.

The tool is not a substitute for a full eye test at an opticians and it might be that the recommended course of action is for the child to undergo a thorough eye examination with an optometrist.

Do children need to be able to read to be screened?

Children do not need to be able to read to be screened. The technology uses techniques suitable to a child's stage of development; most find it a very fun experience.

What clues can a teacher look for?

Children rarely complain about their vision, because they don't know how well they should be able to see. However, there are signs you can look out for that might indicate a problem. These include sitting too close to screens, rubbing their eyes a lot, holding objects very close to the face, blinking a lot or one eye turning either in or out. If a child is falling behind or struggling in class this could also be a sign there is a problem with their vision.

What is the right age for a child to have a full eye test?

Children should have regular eye tests from the age of three. After a child's first eye test, it is important to continue with regular checks. A child should have a check-up at least every two years as problems can occur at any age and, even if there are no obvious symptoms, there could be an underlying eye condition.

What if I don't have time to complete the test for all my pupils?

Not to worry, we know how tricky finding time outside of lessons can be so we have created a free iSpy lesson plan pack that is brimming with information on the science behind vision. This means you can slot this lesson neatly into the science curriculum and complete the test while your pupils continue with their learning.

To register for your free kit visit screeningforschools.com



How does it work?

The SchoolScreeners EZ® Kit has been designed to be operated by teachers, teaching assistants, and other school staff or volunteers to detect poor sight (including problems with colour vision) for pupils aged 7-18 in just three minutes.

And here's how it's done:



Step 1

Register online and receive your SchoolScreenersEZ® kit through the post



Step 2

Download the template letter to gain parental consent to carry out the test



Step 3

Launch the software and complete the test for each of your pupils



Step 4

Print off the results letter generated by the software and send this to your pupils' parents



For more information and to register for your free kit, visit: screeningforschools.com



THE EDUCATION SHOW 2018 HIGHLIGHTS CREATIVITY, WELLBEING AND INNOVATION



Creativity, wellbeing and literacy take centre stage at The Education Show 2018, with education experts joined by leading Special Educational needs expert Lorraine Peterson OBE and Strictly Come Dancing judge Darcy Bussell.

The UK's leading education resources event brings the classroom to life over three days from 15 to 17 March 2018 at the Birmingham NEC. The 2018 show celebrates the mix of practicality, fun and creativity that teachers bring to their roles to inspire their pupils, while supporting the knowledge and commitment of schools. The event features over 225 of the most creative education solutions and resources from well-loved brands and exciting new companies, allowing visitors to get hands on with what inspires children to learn and thrive. Educators, policy makers and leading speakers join them in a diverse programme of professional development during the event, helping teachers navigate policy changes and create a fun interactive learning environment for their pupils. Anita Pal, event director of the Education Show, said, "The Education Show and its community demonstrates the many different aspects of a rich and creative



education each year and it's always a pleasure to work with our teachers to deliver the show. As always, literacy and numeracy are at the heart of the event but this year the role that wellbeing, innovation and the arts have on education are being highlighted in an exciting way." The Education Show's feature areas will help teachers explore topics such as teaching with creativity, health and wellbeing, arts and crafts and learning through technology. Now in its 28th year, the show has become the recognised event for educators to experience the



latest and most innovative and practical education resources and gain practical inspiration from experts and their fellow teachers.

The Education Show 2018 takes place from Thursday 15 to Saturday 17 March 2018 at the NEC, Birmingham and is free to attend. To discover more and to get your ticket, visit www.education-show.com. You can also follow @EducationShow on Twitter for all the latest news and updates!

BOOK FREE TICKETS TO THE BIG BANG FAIR 2018



The Big Bang UK Young Scientists & Engineers Competition where finalists compete for a number of exciting prizes, including the coveted titles of GSK UK Young Scientist(s) and UK Young Engineer(s) of the Year.

The Big Bang Competition looks for the very best projects from every area of science, technology, engineering and maths and aims to celebrate and raise the profile of young people's achievements and provide them with the opportunity to build their skills and confidence in project-based work. The 200 finalists get to showcase their projects at The Fair, where they have their own stands to show off all their hard work to scientists, engineers, students, parents, employers, teachers and celebrities.

Sankha Kahagala-Gamage and David Bernstein from Loughborough Grammar School were crowned UK Young Engineers of the Year in 2017. Inspired to

The UK needs many more engineers and scientists and equipping young people with skills in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) is key to their future employability.

The Big Bang UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair brings these subjects to life for young people and exploring the exciting opportunities out there and the routes into them.

The Big Bang Fair is the largest celebration of STEM for young people in the UK, bringing together an award-winning combination of exciting theatre shows, hands-on activities, interactive workshops and careers information from STEM professionals.

From **rebuilding disaster-struck communities** and **creating dazzling special effects for film**, to **inventing apps that transform our lives** and **making sure there's enough food for everyone in the world**, visitors to The Big Bang Fair can find out from inspiring engineers and scientists about the incredible jobs they do and see how school subjects - like science, maths, D&T, computing and art - can set them off on a journey to landing that dream job. The 2018 Fair will be held at **The NEC in Birmingham, 14-17 March**. This year will see the return of some firm favourites as well as new displays covering off everything from the worlds of robotics to life-and-death mathematical skills, and even an explanation of STEM using... food! Free tickets to The Big Bang Fair are available from www.thebigbangfair.co.uk The Big Bang Fair also hosts the finals of



act after Sankha witnessed a passer-by having an epileptic fit, they developed a wearable vest that monitors heart rate variability and body temperature to efficiently predict an epileptic fit up to eight minutes in advance.

All UK residents in full-time education or training (year group 7-13 and Scottish/NI equivalent) can apply with their engineering or science projects online (www.thebigbangfair.co.uk/competition) or through a regional heat at a **Big Bang Near Me Fair**.

For anyone who can't make it to Birmingham in March there are other opportunities to experience the Big Bang. The UK Fair is complemented by a series of Near Me Fairs, smaller events that take place across the country and are an important part of the programme, helping 11-18 year olds from all backgrounds to discover close to home the exciting and rewarding engineering and science careers that their science and maths subjects can lead to. Find out more here: www.thebigbangfair.co.uk/nearme

4 QUESTIONS EVERY SCHOOL SHOULD ASK BEFORE CHOOSING AN EDTECH SOLUTION

It's one of the most daunting tasks facing modern educators: "Which EdTech solution should I pick for my school?" EdTech solutions can be costly and with an overwhelming number of providers flooding the market, it's not uncommon for schools to waste limited funds on inappropriate solutions. To help you avoid this mistake, here are the four questions you must ask before purchasing an EdTech solution, according to Whizz Education.

1 WHY DO YOU NEED AN EDTECH SOLUTION?

Many EdTech solutions have something to offer but their overall effectiveness will be determined by your specific needs. Do you need something to engage your students during class? Something that will reduce teachers' heavy workloads? Or something that will improve your school's SATs scores? If you want to avoid making a costly mistake, determining exactly why you need an EdTech solution should be your first step when entering the market.

2 WILL IT MAKE YOUR TEACHERS' LIVES EASIER?

We've all been there, you buy a fancy, new (and expensive) gadget, which has promised to simplify your life. However, when you start using it, it becomes apparent that this gadget is so complicated that it actually makes your life harder! A good EdTech product must be easy to use and reduce teacher workload. Even if a product has the richest educational content available, no teacher will buy into it if it adds an extra layer of difficulty to the process of planning lessons. However, this is only half of the equation. The best EdTech providers are those which offer you ongoing training. This training not only teaches your staff how to use the product but also explains



how to specifically integrate it into your curriculum.

3 DOES IT CATER FOR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS?

When teaching a class of 20+ children, the difficulty of providing differentiated learning experiences cannot be understated. Knowing this, why would you invest in an EdTech solution that doesn't cater for each individual student's learning needs? The best EdTech providers create solutions that are appropriate for the modern classroom, making it possible for teachers to differentiate instruction

without adding to their workload.

4 ARE THE RESULTS MEASURABLE?

Many EdTech solutions make grand promises about helping achieve your educational objectives, but these promises will mean nothing if you cannot see tangible results. The best solutions can immediately report on students' progress as they engage with the product, in a format that is both easy to understand and easy to share amongst all relevant stakeholders. It's inevitable that EdTech will

play an increasingly significant role in the classroom, but with so many products on the market and school budgets becoming tighter, the process involved in choosing a solution is becoming increasingly difficult. To avoid blowing your budget on an inappropriate EdTech solution, always consider these four vital questions.

Want more help picking the best EdTech solution for your school? Visit [whizz.com/EdTechAdvice](https://www.whizz.com/EdTechAdvice) to download our free guide.



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It's no secret that the majority of schools are suffering a shortage of relevant teacher applications. Yet other schools are successfully attracting the candidates they need... so what's their secret?

Data from our job board, eteach.com, shows that one key differential is the application method the school offers to the candidates once they have seen the advert. 43% of our 2017 survey respondents told us that the biggest deterrent to changing jobs is the time it takes to apply. Given a blank slate, consider the experience you are offering the candidate. Over 45% of our candidates told us they spend more than 2 hours on each application form!

Thankfully, recruitment technology has moved on in leaps and bounds in the last 10 years.

Firstly, forms can be entirely electronic and accessible by smart phone. Indeed, they need to be. Over 50% of the traffic to our job site now is via smart phone. They want to find vacancies and apply from their phone, in their breaks and in the evening. 76% only want to apply online or by uploading a CV, which means that if you only offer a form that has to be completed with a pen, you instantly slash your response by three quarters. Ouch.

To really compete, schools can offer 'Easy-Apply': a mechanism that instantly pre-populates the application form from the candidate's online profiles, either from their job board profile or their social media profiles. This lets them apply in just minutes. Schools also need to lobby their local authority to point out the disadvantage they are at if forced to use a county-wide 25-page application form. What you actually want is the candidate's contact details and a few lines on their specialisms; the rest can be gathered with a phone call.

Other schools have caught on, offering instead a 1-page 'expression of interest form' so the candidate contact details roll in. Minutia like bank details are simply not relevant at this point! What else do you really need at the start?

The critical point here is that you can follow up with a phone call to gather the rest of the information verbally. This gives you the chance to make judgements on how they come across in conversation and, crucially, sell your employment proposition based on their preferences. Consider nominating a candidate engagement officer to make those calls or hosting a tour. They must be competent: you need to simultaneously

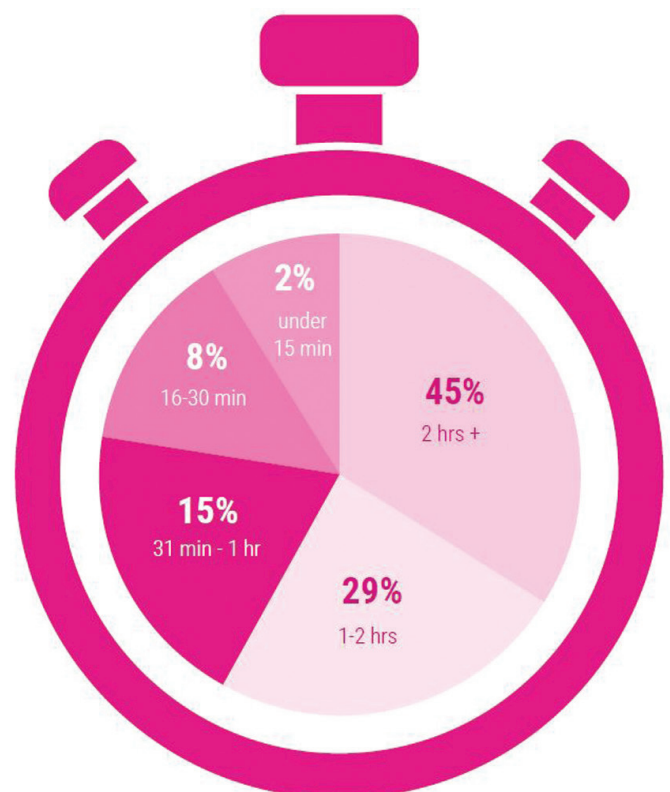
impress and assess!

Even amongst schools offering just electronic online forms, over 60% of applications are abandoned mid-way. The length of the form is the biggest deterrent for teachers: 5 questions lead to 15% fewer applications and 30 questions result in 50% lost.

It may seem like a significant culture change, but schools now have to compete for teachers in a way they never

had to before. The supply of teachers into the profession is not expected to improve soon so it's up to schools and their associated bodies to change tack themselves now to catch the talent.

To find out what the eTeach premium licence can do to revolutionise your workforce, visit <http://www.eteachgroup.com/job-board/> or call us now on 0845 226 1906.



OPPORTUNITY AREA FUNDING TACKLES SOCIAL MOBILITY ISSUES BY OFFERING LIFE EXPERIENCE



School visit funding has received a boost in the form of the Government's £72million Opportunity Area programme, which was announced in October.

The programme aims to tackle social mobility issues and improve opportunities for young people across the country. The Government is splitting the funding across 12 Opportunity Areas – identified as social mobility 'coldspots' – which have both poor social mobility and schools that face challenges.

The 12 Opportunity Areas were announced in two waves – Blackpool, Derby, North Yorkshire Coast, Norwich, Oldham, West Somerset were named as being the first six areas earmarked for funding in October 2017. Education secretary Damian Hinds announced Bradford, Doncaster, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich and Stoke on Trent would join the programme in January.

The areas were chosen after more than a year of collaboration between local educators, employers and voluntary and community organisations to set out the key areas for improvement.

Local independent partnership boards – made up of school leaders, business owners, council leaders and other local partners – will work to boost attainment from the early years of a child's education right through to university.

Other initiatives include projects to raise aspirations by providing all young people in Opportunity Areas with at least four inspiring 'encounters' with the world of work, for example through work experience or mentoring.

The Government also announced that £22million would be shared among all 12

Opportunity Areas through a new Essential Life Skills programme, to help disadvantaged young people have access to the same opportunities as those in the top-performing schools. The aim is to help them develop wider skills such as resilience, emotional wellbeing and employability.

The programme will complement the individual Opportunity Area plans by providing extra-curricular activities, such as sports, volunteering and social action projects, which give pupils the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

The plans also outline how the transition to adulthood will be improved by working with local 'cornerstone' employers to provide young people with experience of the world of work. These include EDF Energy, GCHQ, Barclays and Lloyds Banking Group, Burberry and Rolls-Royce. This work is being led by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to create programmes for young people aged 11 to 18 that raise their career aspirations. Claudia Harris, CEO of the Careers and Enterprise Company, said: "We know that providing young people with exposure to the world of work while in education is one of the most effective ways to improve their employment outcomes.

"That is why we are proud to be leading the charge with over 40 of our economy's leading businesses. This scale of collaboration with more than 260 schools and colleges in the Opportunity Areas will help ensure young people have flourishing futures and workplaces can access the talent they need."

The Education Endowment Foundation will also support schools in Opportunity Areas to improve outcomes for young people, particularly those from

disadvantaged homes, by sharing best teaching practice.

Sir Kevan Collins, Chief Executive of the Education Endowment Foundation and 'evidence champion' for the Opportunity Areas, said: "It's good to see local partners, schools and organisations joining together to improve outcomes for young people. Only through a concerted effort will we be able to make a difference to social mobility in these 'coldspots'. The need now is to move swiftly from planning to action so that children and young people experience the benefit of this investment. "To really have an impact, change has to be informed by evidence. Our Research Schools will be crucial in doing this in each of the Opportunity Areas. They will help to break down barriers so that research does not stay in the pages of academic journals but has a real impact on classroom practice. Allowing teachers to use lessons from what's worked to inform their practice can make all the difference to attainment."

The National Citizen Service (NCS) is also working in each area to help young people benefit from a programme of personal development and volunteering.

Jonathan Freeman, localities lead for the NCS – open to all 16 and 17-year-olds in England – said: "The NCS is a powerful vehicle that brings young people from all communities together, contributing to more integrated communities. The independent evidence is clear that the programme boosts confidence and leadership, well-being and young peoples' ability to succeed in later life.

"It is also getting them involved in social action in their communities; in Scarborough alone last year, 2,800 hours of volunteering was made possible through NCS and 93 young people participated in the programme – our aim is to triple this by 2020, ensuring that young people from all backgrounds can benefit."

Jim Whittaker, a member of the West Somerset Opportunity Area Partnership Board member and Managing Director of Channel Training Ltd, said: "The Opportunity Area plan for West Somerset represents a unique and exciting move to make a lasting change in our community. As an educationalist, local business owner and parent, I'm very pleased to be involved in the project.

"The plan works across business, education and community to create and maintain more opportunity for our young people. The work done and relationships built during the project will be making a positive difference here for many years to come."

For more information on the Opportunity Area programme, see dfemedia.blog.gov.uk.



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The students will have their own Level One or Level Two booklets to fill in as and when they achieve different objectives, both before and during the expedition. When the booklet is completed at the end of the expedition, each child will receive a certificate, and the school itself will also receive a framed certificate.

The Venture Awards run from the Easter Holidays through to the start of the Summer Holidays.

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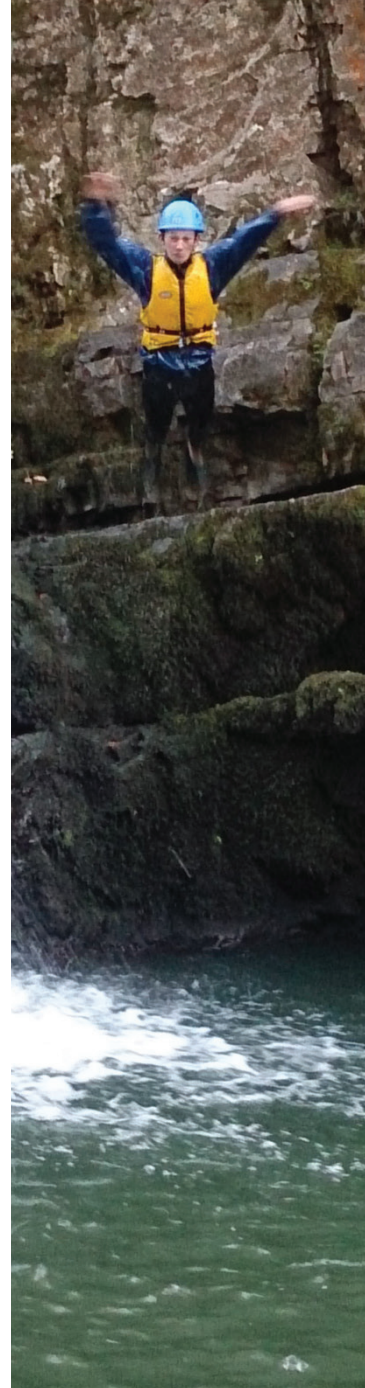
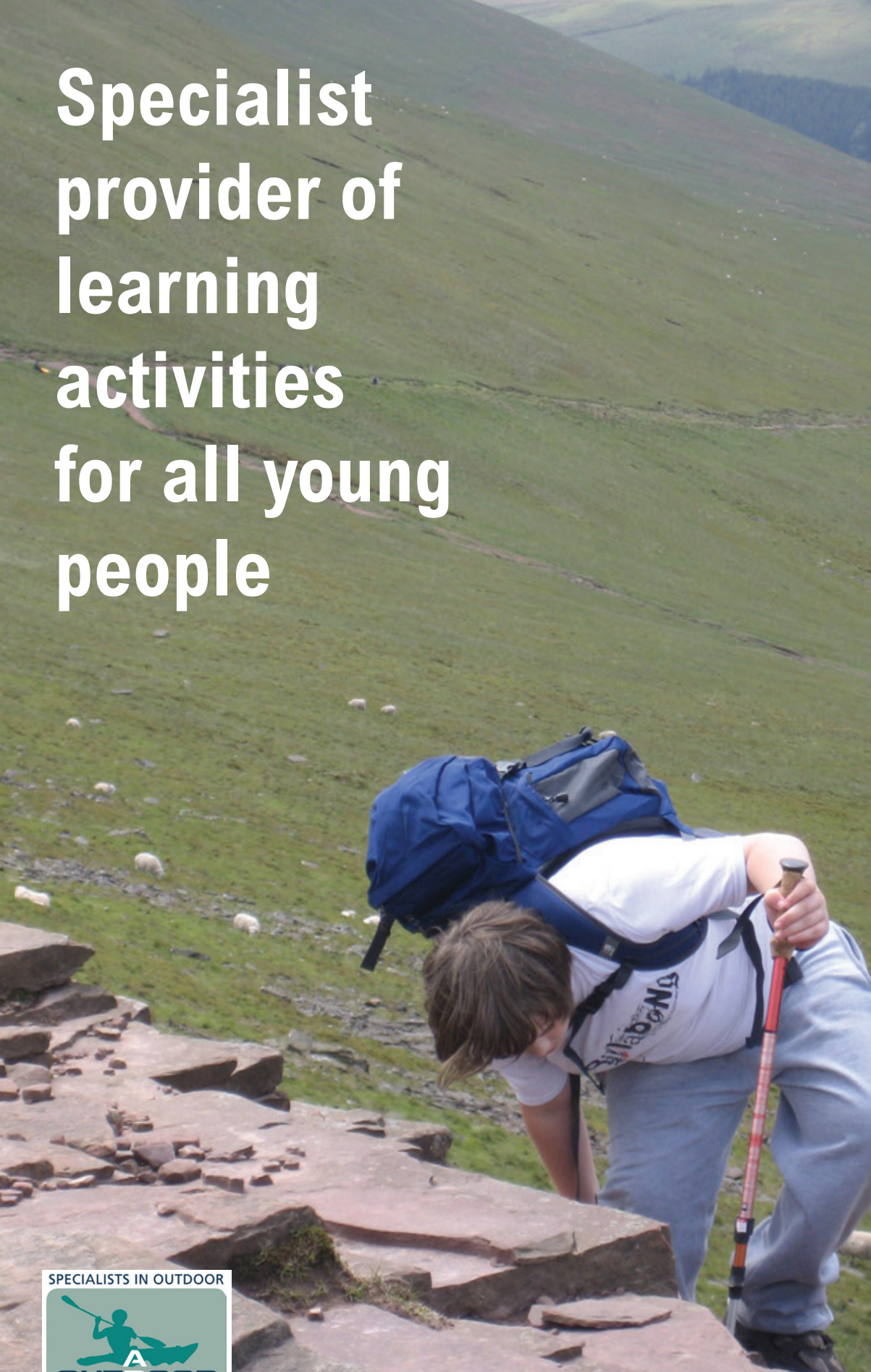


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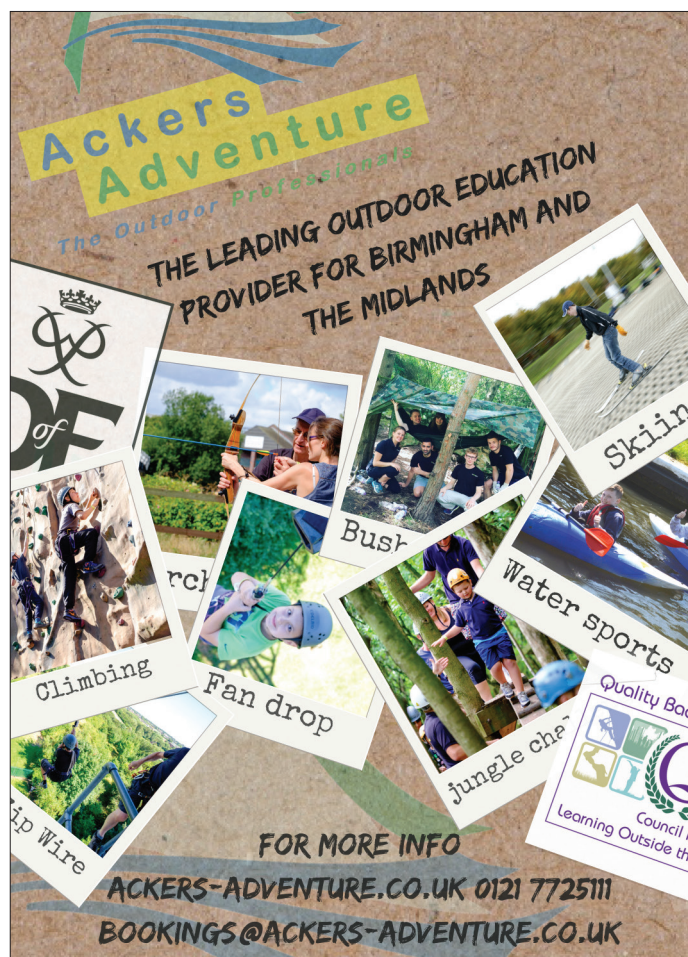
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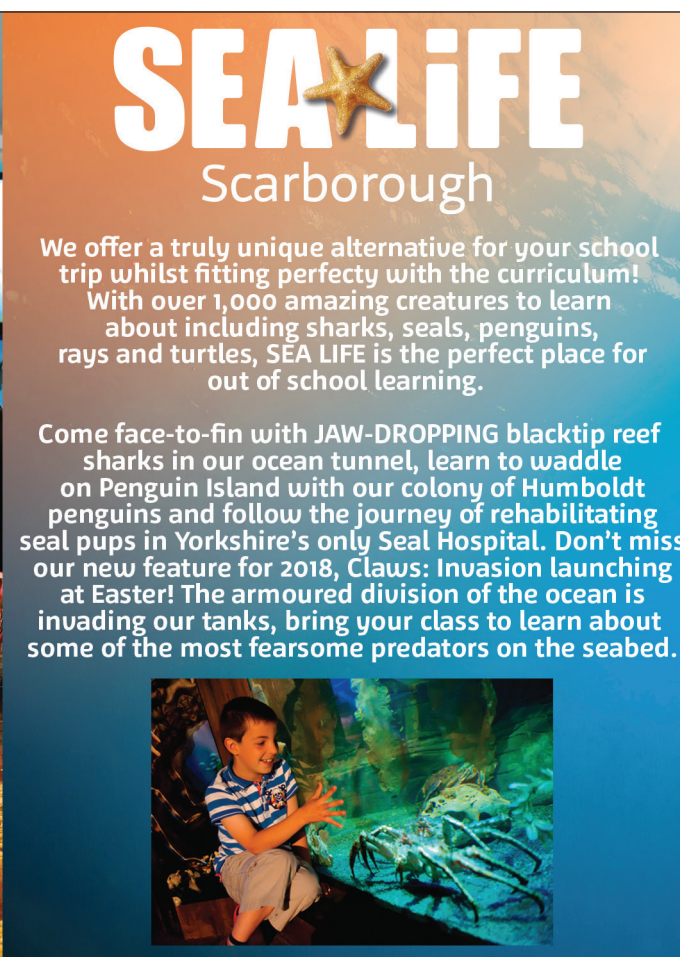
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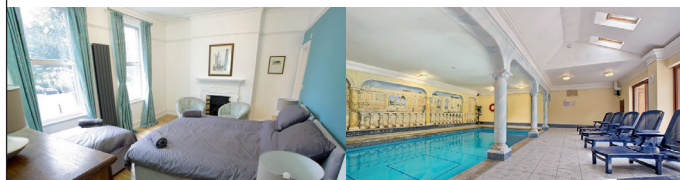


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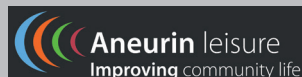


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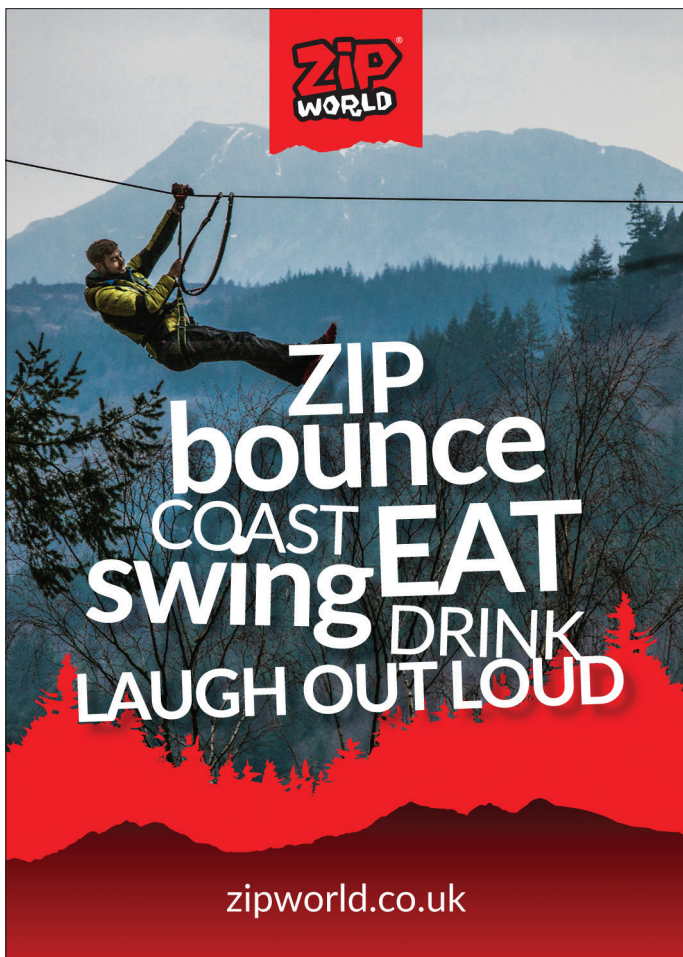
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Charity helps solve SEND schools' governors shortage

With schools struggling to attract volunteers to join their governing board, one charity has recruited 10,000 governors – many of whom have links to global businesses. And one finance manager has spoken of his pride at helping to turn around a school which teaches children with medical and special needs. Governors for Schools (formerly School Governors' One Stop Shop) recruits skilled and committed people to be governors and trustees of schools in England – having placed 10,000 governors in schools in the last five years. It is uniquely positioned to attract skilled and committed volunteers from business due to the strength of its relationships with organisations such as KPMG, Deutsche Bank and Lloyds Banking Group.

Alastair Cowen, 25, is an assistant manager in public sector audit at KPMG. He joined the board at James Brindley School in 2015. The school has 11 sites and teaching centres around Birmingham and provides education for children and young people whilst they are in hospital or are unable to attend mainstream school due to medical conditions or special educational needs. Alastair says: "I liked the fact that the school fulfils an important role in the city's strategy to meet the needs of young people, which is what initially drew me in. Also, back in 2015, the school was in Ofsted 'special measures', so I was keen to work with a team who were trying to make a difference and help to improve the school's rating." See governorsforschools.org.uk for more information.



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Sport Relief need the help of you and your students to beat an epic one billion steps a day.

Singers-turned-boxers Vanessa White and Hannah Spearritt are among celebrities encouraging every corner of the UK to join in with a local challenge as the whole nation comes together. The idea is to walk at least one billion steps per day from 17 to 23 March. To support walkers, a new Sport Relief app will ensure every step counts, while the stars will be out in force for a night of live entertainment on Friday 23 March, on BBC One. Running, dancing, dog walking or Zumba-ing all count towards the steps as the nation comes together to raise money and help vulnerable people to be happier, healthier and safer. Liz Warner, CEO of Comic Relief, said, "Sport Relief gets us all donning our trainers and taking on all types of sporty challenges or running a mile at school to help raise funds.



"In 2018 we have more British celebrities than ever pushing themselves to the limit to help us raise money for Sport Relief, which gives 50% of funds to the UK and the other 50% to the most desperate communities in the world.

"This is the first time we have asked the nation to take up a collective challenge and we can't wait to see how many steps we can all do – let's hit a billion steps and get more donations and sponsors coming in to help others." Teachers and students can get kitted out in limited edition merchandise, available from official partner Sainsbury's and at sportrelief.com.

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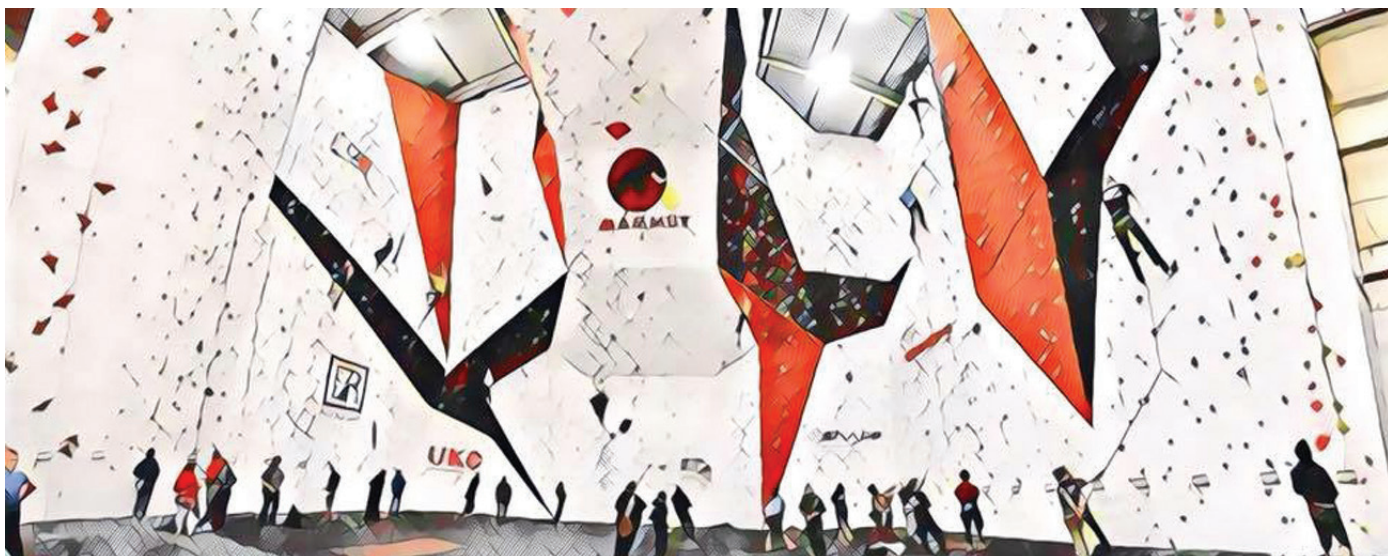
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ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH CLIMBING WALLS AT THE FOREFRONT OF CLIMBING WALL SAFETY



Images: Awesome Walls Climbing Centres Ltd

BY DAVE DOUGLES,
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ABC

Many children learn to climb before they can walk so it's quite obvious that once they've mastered the walking bit, they want to revert back to climbing at some point!

Since the dawn of humanity we humans have climbed trees, whether it was for food or for safety and scaled cliffs for similar reasons! Fast-forward to recent years and the need to climb things has become more of a sporting pass-time than life or death situation...

It started with the mountains; once they were conquered we looked for the harder ways to climb them. Rather than walking up the nice easy angled grassy side, we'd look at that dark oppressing steep rocky side and want to be the first to climb it. We've all heard the stories about Everest and the North Face of the Eiger no? In 2018 we don't need to be mountaineers to be climbers! You can safely climb indoors on artificial structures from 2 meters up to lofty heights of 25 meters! Indoor climbing walls have grown in popularity since the first one built in 1964 and now the UK has an approximate total of 400 to play and train on.

At the forefront of climbing wall safety is the Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC). The ABC was set up in 1997 to promote the safe operation of Climbing Walls. It was started by a group of the early wall owners who realised that for the industry to become established, common practices and procedures were essential. Over the years the ABC has supported



walls as the industry has grown and more recently has started to get involved in promoting participation, particularly in the run up to climbing taking part in its first Olympic Games in 2020.

Climbing promotes self-confidence, teamwork, belief and commitment while having fun and getting fit. Even if the sport of climbing doesn't follow children into adulthood, the lessons learnt will stay with them for a long time.

Children get into the sport via many avenues, these are mainly school visits, birthday parties or taster sessions. Once climbing has been tasted, children can continue by joining climbing clubs or participating with family and friends. There's a huge network of organisations working behind the scenes to help climbing and the people that love it-

Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC)

Website- www.abcwalls.co.uk

Head of Membership Services- ben@abcwalls.co.uk

Contact- www.abcwalls.co.uk/contact/

British Mountaineering Council (BMC)

Website- www.thebmc.co.uk

Email- james@thebmc.co.uk

Contact- www.thebmc.co.uk/contact-the-bmc-office

Mountain Training

Website- www.mountain-training.org/climbing

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National Indoor Climbing Scheme (NICAS)

Website- www.nicas.co.uk

Email- admin@nicas.co.uk

Contact- www.nicas.co.uk/contact

Arrampica Limited make climbing walls manageable and affordable for schools

Paolo Fubini is the Head Technical Adviser and Managing Director of Arrampica Limited, a small company that advises, inspects, trains and assesses personnel on all types of climbing and adventure facilities. Arrampica are currently developing a new offering specifically designed to help more schools successfully engage their students before the first appearance of climbing at the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo.

Does your school have the passion to reach higher?

The world of climbing has changed: once the realm of beards, tweed and leather boots, the modern climber is now a true athlete, fleet of foot who dances up a brightly coloured wall as if defying gravity itself.

Don't believe me? The ultimate proof will come when climbing makes its first full appearance at the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo. We can only guess at the levels of interest this will generate but seeing the uptake in road cycling in recent years then we can anticipate a healthy response, especially from children.

I personally would like to help drive this enthusiasm in our schools. Climbing walls – well designed, well thought out, well run – can have such a positive effect on students' development and the whole school community. And it's not just the students, a good wall can motivate staff and also attract parents and siblings into the school facilities.

I'll make no bones about it: installing a climbing wall, equipment and staff training is a considerable investment, yet the potential for return on this outlay in terms of student motivation and staff engagement most definitely repays this financial commitment time and again. Unfortunately, I also know of many climbing walls – very good ones at that – in educational establishments across the country that are rarely used. What could be stopping the schools from using them? And if you haven't considered investing in a climbing wall at your school, why not? I don't have all the answers, but I can tell you a little about what a climbing wall could do for your school and how you can make it a success.

What can climbing offer my students?

Improvements in fundamental movement skills including balance, agility and coordination; a higher level of finger dexterity and manipulation which can improve handwriting skills; more confidence, persistence, resilience and a sense of responsibility along with developing their communication,

teamwork and problem solving. This is in addition to the practical climbing skills they learn.

"(The climbing wall) has driven (the students) on to develop self-motivation skills and solve problems that they thought were not possible."

Steve Cotton PE Teacher & Assistant Head
Berrymede Junior School.

What type of climbing walls can schools have?

Schools can have any type of climbing wall but make sure you choose the type that is right for your school. A roped wall is a commitment due to the level of staff ratios required, but it includes a higher level of team building and responsibility, and the whole experience is more engaging. Roped climbing is essential for some students with limited mobility. A traverse wall that is used by students in a playground and not used for coaching does not require any staff training or procedures.

Bouldering and lead climbing are both to be included in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, along with speed climbing, where a climber uses an automatic belay device.

How can my school benefit from climbing?

Students of all ages, abilities and backgrounds enjoy climbing, and all levels of disability can be catered for. It is a natural link to the Outdoor Adventure Curriculum, climbing can count towards GCSE PE and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

A simple traverse wall can encourage physical activity at break times and, at the academic end of the scale, some schools have woven their climbing wall into the maths, geography and science curriculums.

How dangerous is climbing?

Statistically climbing is far safer than ball sports, you are over 30 times more likely to be injured playing football than rock climbing¹. The level of perceived danger is higher and it goes without saying that if the supervision of students is not up to

standard an incident could be very serious. In roped climbing students will practise belaying before anyone leaves the ground and an instructor will back-up the rope of novices, but once students are judged to be competent they can manage the belaying themselves. Staff need time and commitment to consolidate their training to achieve the standard required for supervising roped climbing, something which can count towards their CPD and is a motivating activity in itself.

How can I fund a wall and run it successfully?

There are numerous funding routes available to schools. Primary schools, for example, have used the PE and Sport Premium to finance climbing walls and found it easy to evidence that students were more active and participating in different sports. A number of schools use their wall as a revenue stream, with climbers and groups within their region hiring the facility.

As a long-term investment, having your own wall makes a lot of sense. This investment does include time for staff training and maintenance but we believe it is a small price to pay when the outcomes can be so significant.

With two decades' experience in the sector, Arrampica have seen what kind of walls work well in different schools and can make sure a new wall is suitable for your needs.

We're parents ourselves and are acutely aware that schools need to keep a close eye on budgets. Towards this, we are working with a climbing wall manufacturer to design an off-the-shelf bouldering wall and roped wall specifically for schools, their curriculum and the spaces they have available.

To further help reduce costs Arrampica are also looking to hold training sessions for multiple schools, eliminating the need for large numbers of staff to be out of the classroom at any one time.

The next few years are going to be a very exciting time for schools to be involved in climbing, fuelled, we anticipate, by the Olympic and Paralympic spirit. If you would like to speak to us about an existing wall or the potential for a new climbing wall at your school, then please just drop us a line and we'd be happy to have a chat. Telephone Arrampica on 08450 947 923, email info@arrampica.com or visit us at www.arrampica.com

¹Reference: Leisure injuries from ROSPA School Visits Guide

HANDS-ON LEARNING

ARE YOUR STUDENTS GETTING THE MOST OUT
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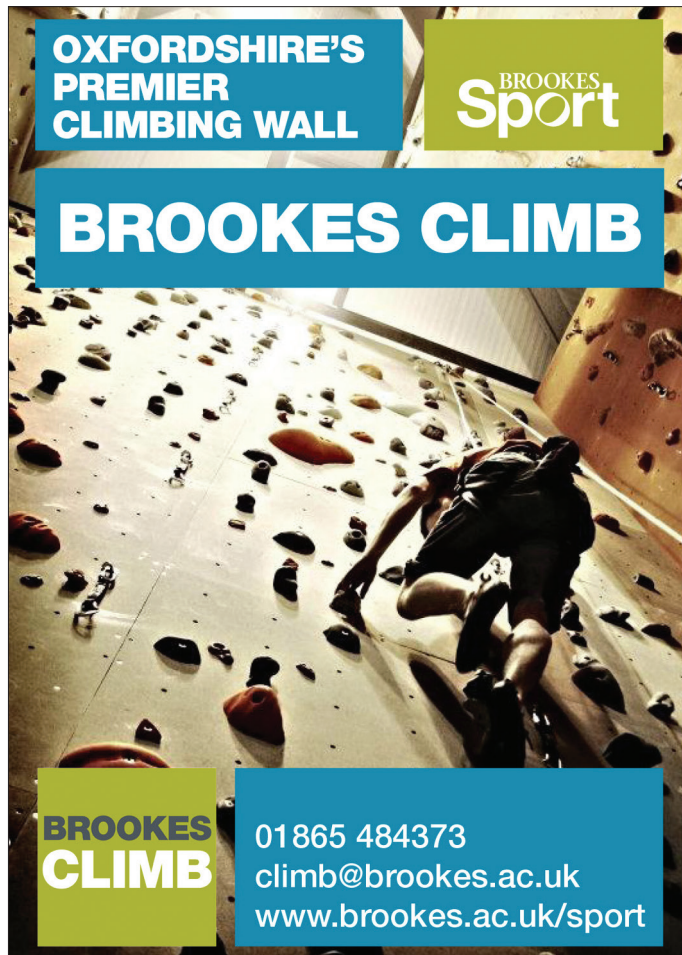




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Why Climbing?

Climbing is a sport that caters for people of all ages and fitness levels. Children tend to be natural climbers, they have a high strength-to-weight ratio, their bodies are flexible and they tend to be more fearless. As well as being a physical activity, each climb is like a puzzle, that requires patience and planning to complete. Over time, regular rock climbing can help develop concentration, determination and problem-solving skills. This combination of creative thinking and physical output, allows less athletic children to shine. Children also gain the focus, drive and perseverance that is essential for getting to the top of a climb. As they improve they will naturally want to try harder climbs. This setting of goals and meeting them gives a great sense of achievement, which in turn can help build everyday self-confidence. Climbing helps

develop strong friendships due to the level of trust involved. These amazing benefits can be further enhanced with the Nation Indoor Climbing Award Scheme (NICAS) and the National Indoor Bouldering Award Scheme (NIBAS). With a nationally recognised syllabus, certificates for achievement, and a pathway to follow, you can keep on progressing through our NICAS or NIBAS scheme whilst having a great time on the way. Awesome Walls Climbing Centres operate six unique facilities- Liverpool, Stockport, Stoke-on-Trent, Sheffield, Dublin and Cork making us leaders with a proven track record of delivering excellent climbing services to all. We have a wealth of experience in designing and delivering structured programmes to suit all ages and abilities from KS1 to GCSE and beyond. Liverpool 0151 298 2422 Sheffield 0114 244 6622 Stockport 0161 494 9949 Stoke 01782 341 919

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2017 winner Halimah Ershad

2016 winners Ben Noar
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- TDI Challenge Final: **4 July 2018**

To find out more please contact the
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or via education@mta.org.uk

The TDI Challenge is organised
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"It has been a great day and I have really enjoyed myself. It was a brilliant experience seeing a modern manufacturing facility like Mazak. This is a great first step for me in to a career in engineering."

Halimah Ershad, Forest School,
2017 Winner of 17-19 category

"Everyone who took part in the final should be really proud of getting to this stage, it was an extremely hard decision to pick the winners, as the depth of talent on display here today was remarkable."

Stewart Lane, Judge, Renishaw plc

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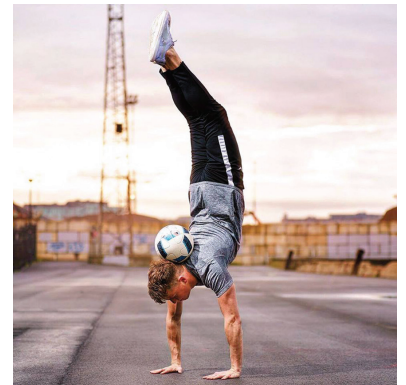
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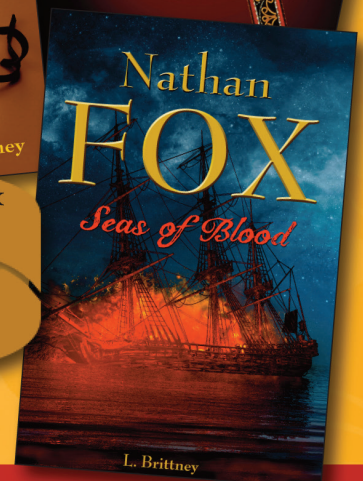
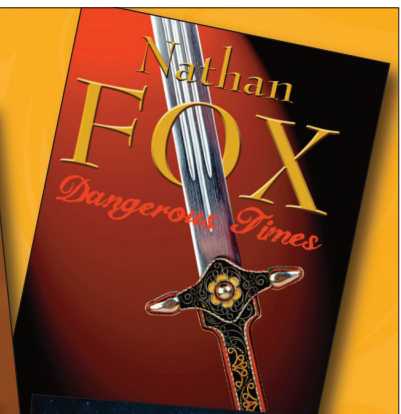
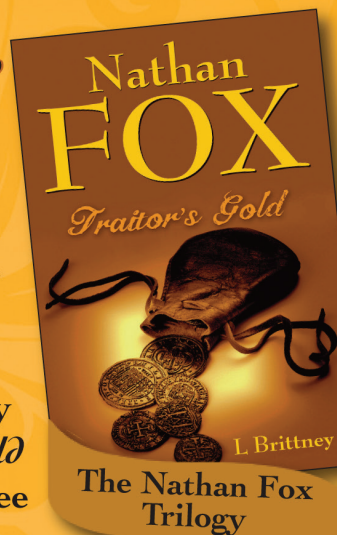
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The Soil Association's Food for Life School Awards programme supports schools to provide healthy school meals, great lunchtimes and food education

The statistics surrounding childhood obesity make for uncomfortable reading. More than one in five children are overweight or obese when they start primary school, and this rises to one in three by the time they leave. Obesity prevalence in children in the most deprived areas of the country is twice that of children in the least deprived areas, a gap which appears to be widening. With eating habits forming young, this is bad news for Britain's health. But there are solutions. The Soil Association's Food for Life School Awards programme supports schools to provide healthy school meals, great lunchtimes and food education that has a positive impact on both pupils and the wider community. The programme is based on a 'whole school approach' framework that guides the development of a healthy food culture in schools. This approach is endorsed by the head teacher, enshrined in the school development plan, and permeates the whole school experience. Recent independent research found that pupils in Food for Life schools are twice as likely to eat five a day and one-third less likely to eat no fruit or vegetables than

pupils in comparison schools. They eat about a third more fruit and vegetables than pupils in comparison schools, and significantly more fruit and vegetables at home. Children in Food for Life schools eat more vegetables not only because they are served higher-quality meals but also because they are inspired to do so. Cooking, growing and farm visit activities have given them a tangible understanding of where food comes from and how it is prepared. Food has been made an integral and central part of the school day, and the dining room a space that supports broader learning about food. Lunches that regularly include food grown by pupils help to reinforce core messages and understanding about healthy eating. The consensus in many schools is that since growing their own produce as part of the Food for Life School Award framework, menus and school meals have improved, with pupils eating better at lunchtime, more willing to try new foods, and increased numbers enjoying school lunches or bringing healthier packed lunches: Children in Food for Life schools are not only eating more veg but are also



40% more likely to report that they "like" or "really like" school meals. Changing dietary behaviours is difficult – you can't simply tell children to eat more veg or dish it up and hope for the best. The integrated, whole school approach that is embedded in the Food for Life framework has been shown to drive real change by engaging and inspiring children to eat well. If all primary schools were to adopt the Food for Life School Awards framework, a million more children would be eating their five a day and 100,000 more children would be eating some veg at school, instead of none at all. To find out more about the Food for Life Schools Award visit foodforlife.org.uk/schools

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Case Study:

A long-term allmanhall client wanted to achieve the Bronze Catering Mark and become accredited with the Soil Association's Food For Life Served Here scheme.

allmanhall advised the client on the Soil Association's criteria and in particular the suppliers' role in achieving such an accolade e.g. a decision was made to procure butchery products from a specific butcher due to its Red Tractor status. A key area of this accreditation is to gather the correct certification and documentation from suppliers, which can be very labour-intensive... allmanhall provided the client with support and resource to make this happen and meet the required standards. The client is delighted to have



achieved the Bronze Catering Mark, in line with their objective. To learn more about how allmanhall inspire improvement, go to www.allmanhall.co.uk or follow the

latest news on Twitter @allmanhall



MUSIC PUTS REVISION BACK ON TRACK

Studytracks founder on how his brainchild improves memory among teens, allowing more to be learned in a shorter time

Traditionally, studying has involved pens, paper and a workbook crammed with revision notes and, to an extent, it still does.

This can often be dull, unengaging and ineffective, and as a result, often more procrastination, than studying, occurs.

This is the opinion of many emerging edtech leaders, and thus they are targeting the hard-to-reach “digital natives” by using their own language. The face of education is changing – are you, as an educator, ready to adapt to the 21st century studying?

Here, George Hammond-Hagan, Ivor Novello award winner and founder of Studytracks, tells QA Education why music could be the answer...

What is your background and how did you come to work on Studytracks?

I have always been into music, from the early days of watching my older brother drum and thinking he was the coolest thing ever, to working in the mailroom for MTV – I just thought music was for me. That led to my first recording contract and a stint onstage in a group, then switching to writing and producing and winning an Ivor Novello. So music was always in my DNA and that’s where Studytracks was born from – my love of music, combined with my frustration of my son listening to music when he was supposed to be studying. I decided, as with most things in my life, music was the answer!

What problems do students have in this “digital” age when it comes to memory?

Today’s students are bombarded by content every minute of the day. This leads to attention span deficits – and it’s not just students, we all have it to a certain degree. But growing up in the age of “now” digital,

for them it’s very hard to engage with anything – especially dry facts and figures in schools. How does a straight line graph equation get higher priority of recollection and retention over all the other info they have outside of schools that’s tailored to make them want it more and presses the right buttons in their brain to get engagement? That’s the struggle.

How can Studytracks help with students’ long-term memory?

This is an interesting question – there’s actually a good deal of research going on in the area of music and memory. You must have heard of “ear worms” before – the kind of song that gets stuck in your head all day? (They’re actually called Involuntary Musical Images.)

That’s because music is actually saved in a different part of our brain than other memories. Because the brain is constantly looking for patterns, and songs are just an audible pattern, songs are more easily retrievable. So the idea that students would study with music playing doesn’t really mean that they’re distracted or



procrastinating, it’s actually helping them to solidify the content in their long-term memory.

What effect does this have on attainment?

So much of attainment depends on how engaged a student is. However there’s also attribution to the way people study, as some are better than others at traditional methods of study to achieve more. Studytracks is a supplement to teaching, it’s not a replacement so it fortifies core knowledge. It also is a great pre-emptive teaching tool. Listen to a track and you’ll have some knowledge about it, just enough to be confident to ask questions and be able to add to it as a foundation for knowledge so in that way it’s invaluable for attainment and completely different from other ways of learning.

How does Studytracks benefit teachers as well as students?

It’s great for flipped learning as well as allowing teachers to do more in less time – no small claim! Teachers on the Studytracks Platform can set playlists and quizzes in minutes that then ping onto the students’ phones as homework for them to listen to and answer questions. Teachers can then, at a glance, see marks, listening duration and more, for individual students or classes, and order them to previous attainment – allowing them to spot exemplary or deficient patterns in knowledge per student and use this to build a more complete profile of their learning.

- Over 165,000 secondary-age students and teachers have joined the Studytracks revolution, with more than 800 songs and a wide range of subjects covered. For more information, see studytracks.education



Take7: The New Music Practice App

Getting a student to practice their instrument both regularly and effectively is one of the greatest challenges faced by music teachers. A 2014 study by the ABRSM found that 63% of teachers cited 'lack of practice and motivation' as the main barrier to students making progress. More recent research amongst young learners conducted by Take 7, a new music learning app, found that enjoyment plays a key role in making sure they stick to their practice.

"Normally I practice once a week, but when I'm not enjoying it, I don't as much" Young Learner 14, Trumpet

Designed by music teachers with this problem in mind,

Take7 combines all the tools a young learner needs into an easy-to-use digital platform - boosting engagement and making practice more efficient. By giving feedback on each performance, highlighting the passages they struggled with the most, and allowing them to slow down the music to suit their level, this app lets the student to take control of their learning process, replacing time spent in lessons learning notes instead focusing on musicality. In research, parents recognised the importance of placing control in the hands of their children.

"My daughter would be really motivated by the fact that she is in control of the technology" Parent

"I think it will encourage me to actually practice" Young



learner, 13 saxophone

With a comprehensive selection of music to play from, as well as three listening options ('All Parts', 'My Part' and 'Accompaniment') the app adds another level of choice to the budding musician, as well as simulating the feeling of playing in an ensemble, whether that's with a pianist, string quartet or full symphony orchestra.

"It's like your orchestra's with you at home" Young Learner aged 9, Flute

Take7 also actively

encourages students to maintain regular practice by offering rewards in the form of bronze, silver and gold medals for each successfully completed practice loop. Managing Director David Owen, says "We're not resting on our laurels and have lots of new product features coming up this year, including In App Tuners and progress trackers". With 9,000 users across the world and 2,000 in the UK, Take7 has begun to make a difference to encouraging music practice regimes for all learners.

• See take7music.com

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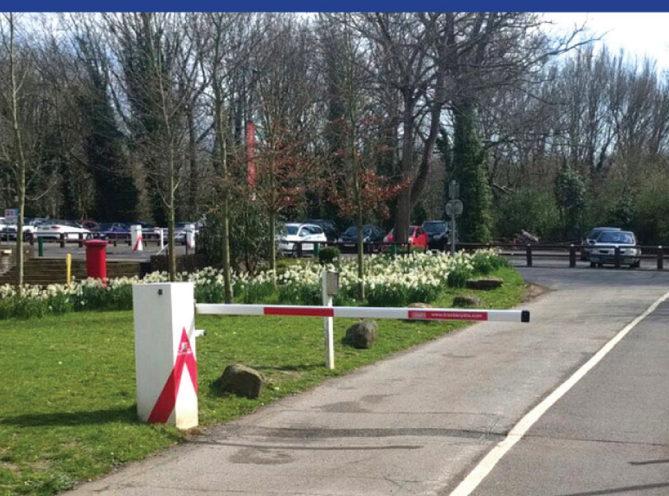
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Selectaglaze helps a Cambridge College to improve sustainability in a Grade II Listed building

Jesus College, part of the University of Cambridge, is known for its Listed buildings, sustainable design projects, and modern architecture. In 2014 it embarked on the West Court development by purchasing the Grade II Listed buildings belonging to its neighbour, Wesley House. The College wished to refurbish the Grade II Listed building to make it heat efficient and sustainable, while also keeping its original features. However, creating a specific sustainable agenda posed some challenges. The main contractor, Cocksedge, approached Selectaglaze, the UK's leading provider of secondary glazing, for advice and assistance. The primary windows were draughty, allowing heat to escape and suffered from noise ingress and egress. The secondary glazing had to be considerate with regard to the architectural heritage of Jesus College. Selectaglaze had worked on the College's Chapel Court student accommodation

refurbishment, where it treated over 300 openings. Selectaglaze subsequently installed over 100 secondary glazing units in West Court. It was important that the secondary glazing did not detract from the original primary windows; iron casements set into stone mullions. A combination of casements and horizontal sliders matched the original design to avoid the introduction of new sightlines. Finished in anodised bronze, they complement the overall feel of the building. Secondary glazing traps an insulating layer of air, which can reduce heat loss by 50%. With the introduction of low emissivity glass, U-values of around 1.8 can be achieved. High performance twin seals help to virtually eradicate draughts. Furthermore, noise ingress is significantly reduced. A gap between the primary and secondary glazing of at least 100mm achieves a reduction of 45dB - rising to more than 50dB if specialist acoustic glass is specified.



Established for fifty years, and a Royal Warrant Holder since 2004, Selectaglaze is the leading specialist in the application of secondary glazing for all building types. Contact Selectaglaze on 01727 837271/e mail: enquiries@selectaglaze.co.uk or visit: www.selectaglaze.co.uk



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An Affordable Choice, says Richard Aylen, Junckers' Technical Services Manager

Junckers' sports floors are made in solid hardwood, one of the most durable surfaces available and virtually unbeatable in terms of lifecycle costs. All our sports floors comply with Sports England and Sport Scotland's guidance for Affordable Sports Floors and are the ideal choice for schools, colleges and universities.

PERFORMANCE

Junckers sports floor systems comply with EN 14904. Within the Affordable Sports Floor price range we can offer both Category A3 and A4 systems, exceeding Sport England's minimum performance requirement.

MAINTENANCE AND LIFE SPAN

Every floor finish, including synthetics, will become damaged over time. The difference with a Junckers solid hardwood sports floor is that it can be sanded and re-finished eight to ten times during its life. With 12-year intervals between sandings, a typical lifespan of 60 years will comfortably be exceeded. Compared with a typical 15 year life of a synthetic or "engineered" floor there really is no comparison in terms of life cycle cost.

Contractors in our Approved Contractors network scheme can offer an inspection service including periodic inspections of the floor and advise on care and cleaning. Junckers offer a comprehensive range of high quality, professional maintenance and finishing products to keep the floor in optimum condition throughout its lifespan.

CAPITAL COST

The installed cost of our floors falls comfortably within the range for Sport England's Affordable Sports Floors.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A hardwood floor is one of the most environmentally friendly sports floor finishes you could hope to find. All Junckers' timber is from properly managed



forests with FSC and PEFC chain of custody certification. Timber is harvested from old, established forest areas which are constantly replanted. Our floors are BREEAM A+ rated in the BRE Green Guide and we have EMAS 111 and ISO 14001 Environmental Management Certification. In addition, our products have low (E1) formaldehyde emissions under EN 14342. Our timber floors are carbon neutral and at the end of their lives they are very easy to recycle, in contrast to materials made from fossil fuels.

RETRACTABLE SEATING SYSTEMS

Junckers' flooring systems are perfectly suited for use with retractable seating, hundreds of examples in the UK alone are testament to this fact. Our floors may be

strengthened in a simple way to cope perfectly with load bearing, which leaves the sprung quality of the floor unaffected. A solid hardwood floor will not be marked or damaged by wheels, and surface tracking, rucking or scuffing is non-existent with a Junckers floor.

A safe, high performing sports floor with the right environmental accreditations and unbeatable lifecycle costs which falls within the guidelines for Affordable Sports Floors set by Sport England – a Junckers sports floor is hard to beat.

Junckers

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EDUCATION WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The partnerships between independent and state schools in communities have been growing in strength with the deep rooted belief that education is a charitable endeavour. These are generally voluntary with mutual reciprocity with a specific aim such as increasing the proportion of top students going to university, sharing sports, music and drama facilities or providing extra curricula activities such as debating and school trips whilst giving pupils a better understanding of different cultural backgrounds. In every successful partnership, everyone benefits which is why Premier Modular replicates this model, putting great value on forming strong, mutually beneficial client relationships. They achieve this through being a forward thinking company, striving for constant improvement and innovation and using an open and transparent working practice where all ideas are welcome.

The client benefits from the use of off-site construction, through programme reduction and minimised disruption in an educational environment. As the manufacture of the building is taken out of the critical path on the programme, site works including foundations, services and external works can be completed simultaneously with the building being completed in the factory. This provides a much quicker return on investment when providing extra teaching

space or boarding accommodation to increase pupil numbers.

Premier Modular Limited was recently selected to provide a temporary science village to form part of a large re-development project at Tonbridge School; a prestigious independent boys' boarding school. The project was awarded to Premier due to the high quality of their buildings, their flexibility and willingness to create bespoke solutions, the detail presented at tender stage and the very positive references provided from other high profile private schools. The two storey building provides science classrooms, teaching and prep rooms, staff offices and required a high level of specialist internal fit-out; including full science department furniture, fume extraction systems and complex M&E. This full turnkey project included the installation of associated services and foundations made more complex by the avoidance of a tank trap from WWII.

Another excellent example of partnering in action is the work Premier Modular is carrying out with ISG Construction and Manchester City Council as their preferred supply chain partners. They provided a new permanent classroom block to accommodate an additional form of entry for St Margaret's C of E Primary School, providing 270m² of accommodation for their nursery and foundation stage classes.



been engaged by ISG to deliver a further 4 new school classroom blocks, an early years facility and a 2FE school, which is a testament to the commitment of Premier Modular's team to delivering well-designed quality buildings on time. So in a market where the key priority is educational excellence, expectation of parents and students is increasing, sustainability is of growing importance and facilities need to be flexible, functional and beautiful; the way forward has to be collaborative, engaged and open partnering agreements.

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Consort Claudgen launches SL single-zone controllers



Consort Claudgen have introduced three new wireless controllers which can be connected to one or multiple SL heaters to form an SL heating system. All controllers have comfort and setback temperatures settings. The SLPB and SLVT controllers have a control button with status indicators and a 4-stage run-back timer where a heating period remains active until the run-back timer expires. There is a choice of three time periods available: 5, 15 or 30 minutes. When the button is pressed

four times, this takes the run-back time period to 20, 60 or 120 minutes. Additionally, the SLVT has temperature control buttons and a digital display to show the room temperature. The SLTI, however, features a 7-day timer with three heating periods per day and is designed with four large control buttons with an electronic lock to prevent tampering with controls. For details, visit www.consortepl.com or call Sales at 01646 692172.

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TAKING IT OUTSIDE

Why should the outdoor environment be an integral part of children's experience in Early Childhood Education?

Many of the things associated with early childhood memories happen outside, for it has a freedom and limitlessness that embodies the infinite possibilities of being a child, it is both new and familiar, safe and risky. Being outside offers the permitted mischievousness of jumping in a muddy puddle; catching a pure golden leaf, using stones and pine cones as an impromptu currency, making the most exquisite concoctions with mud as the only ingredient and building a cardboard box tower in a make believe world where trees are creatures and the wind is a spirit trying to catch you... Working outside gives children opportunities and experiences that are either impossible or severely limited inside. The outside space isn't just physical but it frees the imagination, heightens the senses and enables thinking in a completely different way. Of course, there is running and climbing and chasing and throwing, but despite what some may think, the outdoor environment isn't just about children developing their physical skills. The entire curriculum can be made to happen there; developing language through excited voices and understanding the need for co-operation through discussing plans and ideas, the inevitable mathematics involved in the quantities and shapes of precious objects found and using knowledge of writing to chalk a large 'keep out' sign by the secret den. Underpinning this all of the time are the



'constants' of a child's learning; the creativity of telling stories, imagining roles, finding out about the world in an inimitable authentic way, trying, working out, solving problems, persisting and succeeding. Although teaching and learning reflect the same principles wherever a child is, working outside obviously needs to be carefully considered and resourced properly to ensure that children's experiences and learning opportunities are optimised. There need to be the spaces to safely run and jump, but also the cosy den to curl up and talk to a friend or listen to the rain. In Sweden there is a saying "There is no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong sort of clothes". That basic human knowledge of understanding the weather requires an 'always out' policy, with children protected from the cold and waterproofed against the rain, but also shaded from the sun and shielded from the wind. Children need big construction objects because whatever they choose to build can go as high as possible and when the time for a den arrives, they need to know that everything they require is close at hand. The possibilities of water, and its effect on everything needs to be explored so dedicated equipment to pour, scoop,

soak up and collect needs to be available too. When a strange beetle is spotted, or a tiny fragment of stone needs to be magnified, children need to know that there are resources and equipment that can immediately help them achieve this. New games are invented every day with complicated rules that only the children themselves understand; resources that help this and make the mathematics explicit will consolidate and make sense of all their retained numeracy. Stories are acted out hundreds of times in hundreds of different ways before they eventually find themselves in the pages of a book. Children need costumes to make this happen, real life objects to accentuate its believability and natural objects to become valuable props. Careful and considered use of the outdoor area not only enhances children's knowledge and understanding but also adds to it in a unique way. The specific memories that we help to create will support children so that they can achieve and succeed. For more information and support in planning and equipping your outdoor environment, visit www.earlyexcellence.com today.

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The burning issues surrounding fire safety in schools

Are you doing everything you need to when it comes to the safeguarding of children and staff? Here, the Fire Industry Association talk us through some myths and facts surrounding Fire Risk Assessment in Schools

Fire safety in a school environment is absolutely paramount. Unfortunately, there does seem to still be a lot of confusion surrounding fire safety, and in particular, fire risk assessment. We aim to clear that up by busting some of those myths!

Myth #1: Fire risk assessments are only a recommendation.

Wrong!

Failure to carry out a fire risk assessment is a criminal offence. Article 9 of The Fire Safety Order 2005, Article 53 and 54 of The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Article 25 and 26 of The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 places a duty on the person responsible to make an assessment of the fire risks to which relevant people are exposed to identify the general fire precautions that need to be implemented. Where the assessment identifies the need for improvements, failure to implement those improvements is also a criminal offence, see Shell International Ltd case 2009.

It is always advisable to write down the risk assessment and the various control measures, but where five or more people are employed* the risk assessment must be recorded (written down).

* 'Employed' includes part time, temporary and voluntary workers.

If you don't know how to do a fire risk assessment – ask a professional. A list of certified professional fire risk assessors is available on the Fire Industry Association website under 'Find a Member'.

Myth #2: I've recently had a false alarm and evacuated everyone so this can count as one of my regular fire drills.

Wrong!

False alarms cannot generally be counted as fire drills. A fire drill is properly planned in advance. The purpose of a fire drill is twofold. Firstly, it reinforces the fire procedures and training given to staff. A false alarm may well satisfy this objective. However, fire drills also serve the purpose of monitoring the behaviour of staff when the alarm system operates and timing the evacuation. This cannot occur in the event of a false alarm because it occurs without warning, precluding the pre-planning that precedes a fire drill and the monitoring of the drill. After a false alarm, people normally return to work immediately in order to reduce disruption to business. After a fire drill, there should be a debrief with fire wardens and those monitoring the drill, so that any appropriate lessons are learned and fed back into training. Equally, if there has been a spate of false alarms, it might be appropriate to suspend the next planned fire drill, so avoiding lack of confidence in the fire alarm system and the complacency that arises from constant evacuation.

Myth #3: All fire fighters and ex-fire fighters are competent to carry out a fire risk assessment.

Wrong!

This is a common myth believed by members of the public, including those responsible for school buildings. Experience in the Fire & Rescue Service does provide an understanding of fire behaviour and some understanding of the response of building construction to a fire. However, this is not the same as an understanding of the principles and practise of fire safety. Within the Fire &

Rescue Service, fire safety and its enforcement is a specialist discipline. Even if a fire fighter has spent an entire career within the fire and rescue service and has reached senior officer level, they will not necessarily have been exposed to the practice of fire safety to the extent necessary to carry out the fire risk assessments required by fire safety legislation.

Equally, many specialist fire safety officers from Fire & Rescue Services do pursue a career in the private sector after leaving the Fire & Rescue Service, and may be very competent in the field of fire risk assessment. It is difficult for members of the public to make a judgement of the competence of those with fire and rescue experience (and indeed any other experience, such as in the field of health and safety) to carry out a fire risk assessment. For this reason, various professional bodies and certification bodies maintain registers of persons independently verified as competent in fire risk assessment.

There are also certification schemes for companies that offer fire risk assessment services; where a duty holder wishes a third party to carry out their fire risk assessment, the use of companies that are third-party certificated by a UKAS-accredited Certification Body to carry out fire risk assessments is recommended by the Fire Risk Assessment Competency Council, as such companies not only employ competent fire risk assessors but have in place management systems to ensure the quality of the assessments. All members of the FIA listed on the FIA website as offering fire risk assessment services are third party certificated.

Go to fia.uk.com, and click 'Find a Member' to find a list of certificated professionals.

What should you look for to determine competence when choosing fire safety service providers?

The Answer

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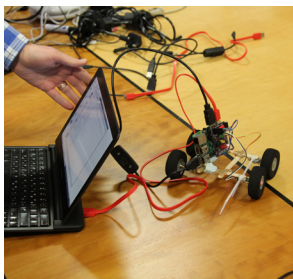
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SPRING SEES HUGE STEM GROWTH!

From engineering events to super science resources, this spring is packed with things to do, see and take part in for teachers to help encourage students to embark on a career in STEM. With a much-publicised shortage in students taking up science, technology, engineering and maths at degree level – especially among female students – it's never too early for teachers to spark pupils' interest...

BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK 2018 runs from 9 to 18 March. Teachers are being asked to attend or organise events to collaborate with other teachers and learners and share best practice. Find speakers, volunteers and advisors to join your school for Science Live – the British Science Association's event platform that enables people – whether as organisers, speakers, volunteers, or attendees – to connect with one another. See britishscienceweek.org to get involved!



The words "physical computing" may not mean much to some teachers but as part of the KS2 National Curriculum, ICT in school must allow pupils to operate external robotics and devices. FutureLearn offer CPD on 'Teaching Physical Computing with Raspberry Pi and Python' and programme coordinator Dan Fisher and training manager James Robinson explain why their course is much-needed in an ever-changing world of computers. Dan and James told us that an understanding of the basics in coding is essential, adding, "Topics like encryption, machine learning, AI and computer ethics are going to become increasingly important for students and therefore educators to understand. A reasonable understanding of the principles of computing is needed in order to engage in these important and highly relevant topics."

Continues over page

THE BIG BANG FAIR 2018 at the Birmingham NEC is booking up fast – the free tickets may still be available for Saturday 18 March when QA Education goes to press. With stage shows including Gastronaut and the Quantum Mechanical Chocolate Factory (a delightfully wacky food-based presentation) and the Not At Christmas Lectures (from the Royal Institution, featuring superb slo-mo to bouncing balloons, foam fountains and mind-controlled explosions), there will be a wealth of entertaining demonstrations and interactive displays on show. See page 17 for more.

MAKE THIS THE YEAR YOU PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE, WITH THE TRUSTED AGRIPPA MAGNETIC FIRE DOOR HOLDER

Over one third of people admit that they have seen a fire door propped open in their building. By doing this you are not maintaining an effective means of escape for those you are responsible for within the building, putting their lives at great risk.

British manufacturer Geofire has solved this issue with the Agrippa magnetic fire door holder. The device is fitted to the wall to hold the fire door open using a magnet, avoiding damage to both the fire door and the floor. Agrippa differs from traditional fire door retainers because of its wire-free installation, as the device is battery powered. Geofire is the UK's leading manufacturer of hard wired fire door magnets. Nick Goddard, Research and Development Manager, said: "The Agrippa fire door holder isn't like any other sound activated device on the market. It can be installed at any height. However, for

a door with a conventional door closer, we recommend installing the holder at the top of the door to avoid costly damage to the door and floor, as well as for hygiene reasons in a hospital environment.

Packed with features, the Agrippa magnetic fire door holder has a daily timed release option, to ensure all doors are closed at the end of the day; a battery level indicator, to allow the responsible person to check the status of the holder; and a low battery, fail-safe power cut, to ensure doors are not held open when the unit is out of battery. Uniquely, the Agrippa magnetic fire door holder can record the sound of your building's specific fire alarm, ensuring the alarm is the only sound that will release the fire door.

The Agrippa magnetic fire door holder is recognised by UK Fire and Rescue Services and the London Fire Brigade, suitable for installation to BS 7273-4 Standard Actuation (Category B) and conforms to EN1155 and is CE marked.

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Empiribox science resources have helped boost a school's approach to the subject, with fantastic results. Lacking the expertise and resources to improve science results, Broadford Primary School head Malcolm Drakes found Empiribox. The rest, as he says, is history, explaining, "We were immediately impressed. Here was a set of simple but effective resources that would let us deliver high end lessons with a WOW factor. Each month all year groups study the same topic featuring hands-on investigative activity guaranteed to engage pupils of all abilities create a school-wide buzz of excitement and promote collaborative working and best practice amongst staff."

GIRLS INTERESTED IN STEM are being encouraged to create by the authors of a new book: *micro:bit In Wonderland*. The must-have tome for any tech-savvy tween is written and designed by Dr Tracy Gardner and Elbrie de Kock from Tech Age Kids. Their craft and tech approach uses the BBC's famous mini-computer and the 12 projects, all inspired by the Lewis Carroll story, help develop skills in creative and computational thinking, computer programming, craft and electronics. Dr Gardner says, "As children make each project they will build their knowledge of the micro:bit and develop creative and computational thinking skills to eventually imagine, design and create their own projects."



Masters of maths are being invited to join the NCETM to become specialists in the subject. For the third year running, 140 primary teachers will be selected to join the primary Mastery Specialists programme, run by the NCETM in conjunction with Maths Hubs. At the same time, a smaller number of secondary teachers is sought to join the secondary programme. Selected teachers will take part in the development year of the programme during 2018-19, and, in the following year, work with small groups of nearby schools to help them introduce teaching for mastery themselves. The closing date is 5 March. Secondary: each Maths Hubs will select between two and four teachers to attend training events, and start in-school work, during this school year (2017-18), and continue their work next year (2018-19) and beyond. More information and an application form can be downloaded [here](https://www.ncetm.org.uk/teaching-for-mastery). Closing date: 19 February 2018. This is the latest phase of the wider Teaching for Mastery Programme, funded by the DfE and launched in 2016, which will eventually result in the training of approaching a thousand Mastery Specialists, across the primary and secondary phases, who, collectively, will pass on their expertise in teaching for mastery to more than 11 000 schools by 2023.

To read more about Empiribox, Raspberry Pi, the micro:bit and many other STEM resources including CPD sessions, see our website [qaeducation.co.uk](https://www.qaeducation.co.uk).



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HOW TO BOOST STEM APPEAL

Demand for STEM skills is strong across all economies and it is set to grow in the coming years. Despite this, the issue of falling numbers in the uptake of higher level science and technology based education has been the subject of many debates, studies and reports for several decades and there remains an ongoing concern and increased recognition of the need to reverse this trend.



Success in promoting STEM education depends on high quality, well trained, motivated subject specialist teachers who are provided with the tools and environments with which to attract the students and to deliver effectively. Students are more likely to engage in STEM subjects if they can see a tangible and relevant objective and any new learning space needs to ensure that research, study, design, testing and realisation can be readily accommodated as well as having the widest possible student appeal. STEM in schools suffers from image and perception issues which presents challenges for educationalists who are trying to widen the appeal of science

and technology based subjects to a wider cross section of the school population. Students born of the technology age are not motivated or stimulated by dark, old fashioned, uninspiring school laboratory and workshop designs which have remained unchanged for decades. Educationalists, school interior designers and specialist furniture suppliers are having to work much harder and become much more innovative to change these perceptions, help schools compete with what are regarded by some as the more contemporary subjects and remove the gender bias associated with STEM based learning. Effective interior design combined with high

quality contemporary furniture systems which facilitate and promote pupil centred learning can help change attitudes towards science so that students are more receptive to the truly exciting possibilities which the subject offers. New more contemporary designs which utilise modern high specification materials in a less formal, more interesting and much more flexible way can provide the teachers with the sort of environment needed for modern pedagogy. Such designs need not be restrictive of more formal, whole class address/demonstration as and when needed, from any one of a number of equally well-suited locations in the room rather than from a single fixed

teaching position. Crucially the contemporary, flexible, application based innovative room layouts can change the image of STEM and help reverse the downward trend in student uptake. For most schools, the creation of a new STEM facility or refurbishment of a laboratory is a 25 year investment which will have to serve several generations of students and a number of different teachers during that time. New age designs are highly space efficient, provide generous worktop space per student and excellent circulation space which encourages teachers to move around and engage rather than operating exclusively from the behind the same single fixed position bench all the time. This makes it possible to use the room in different ways and can help future proof the new facility. Never compromise build quality or choice of application specific materials for things like worktops. Although budgets are always tight, selection should be made on the basis of the best life cycle value rather than the lowest first cost which is always a false economy. Mike Serridge is Managing Director at interior space planners S+B UK www.splusb.co.uk



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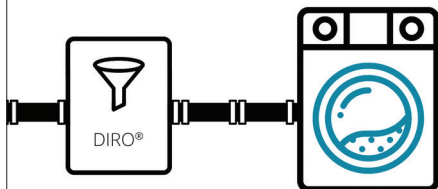
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WINTER BUGS ARE STILL RIFE TEAL HELPS SCHOOLS TO COPE

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Although most sneezes can result in children catching a common cold, younger children are at an increased risk of developing further problems from illnesses because their immune system is still developing. Manty Stanley, managing director at TEAL, says: "Hand hygiene needs to stay top of the agenda as it can safeguard both pupils and staff against winter bugs and the disruption they can cause. Hand washing



should be an essential lesson for all children giving them a skill and habit for life."

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