

A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE PROCUREMENT

Naomi Clews explains the 'five
rights' of procurement

SECURE FOR SUMMER

With less footfall during the summer
holiday it's important to know that
school premises are secure

EDTECH ON A BUDGET

Seven strategies to save money
on your school's education
technology procurement

THE ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL

Elements Primary has taken a simple
– but effective – approach to edtech



PLASTIC- not so fantastic

Georgeham Primary School, in Devon, was the
UK's first school to receive plastic-free status

"The supply teachers deal has reduced workload and helped us save £2,500 in 3 months."

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Chief Operating Officer
Rainhill School

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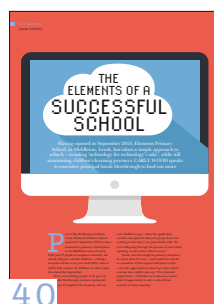
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LIVE IT

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Plastic – not so fantastic

Schools have been challenged to eliminate use of single-use plastic by 2022. We look at some of the great work carried out by staff and pupils at Georgeham Primary School.

Editor's comment

Achieving value for money in the purchases you make for your school is essential – particularly when budgets are tight. To help with your buying decisions, procurement is a recurring topic in this issue.

Independent procurement consultant Naomi Clews gives us an insight into how to get buying 'right' – by utilising the 'five rights' of procurement – and provides strategies to stretch your budget further. We also pick up on this in our ICT matters section. With edtech purchases among some of the most expensive you can make for your school, we look at seven strategies that can save money on your school's edtech procurement. This month's **TECHNO GEEK** offers some buying advice and we also speak to Elements Primary School to find out how a simple approach to edtech can be an effective one.

Sticking with buying – and with the coming summer holiday in mind – we asked the experts what you need to consider in order to keep your school premises secure when there is, inevitably, less footfall at school during the break. Speaking of the school holidays, we asked SBM Sue Birchall to weigh up term-time versus all-year-round working. Having worked both ways, Sue tells us her preference and the reasons for it. Working SBM is also doing some summer dreaming in this issue and explains why, the next time you meet a change initiative, you should approach it as you would your annual summer holiday – with excited anticipation for all you are about to experience!

Also in this issue, we asked, 'What will it take for all SBMs to be recognised as vital members of SLTs?' While many SBMs now make up part of their schools' senior leadership teams, some are still being kept on the side-lines. This was one of our more heated **BIG ASKS**, with contributors keen to offer advice to anyone not yet on their SLT – they should be, it seems!

Another hot topic this month is plastic waste. With the government challenging schools to eliminate their use of single-use plastics by 2022, we caught up with Georgeham Primary School, in Devon – the UK's first school to receive plastic-free status – to learn from those in the know.

That's it from us for another school year. We'll be back in September to guide you through the 2019/2020 ups and downs! As ever, please do get in touch with any ideas for the magazine, opinions you'd like to share or success stories we can heap praise on. Email vicki@intelligentmedia.co.uk or tweet us @edexec.

Whether a term-time or all-year-round reader, we hope you have a great summer!

ED EXEC
EDITORIAL TEAM



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Contributors

The education sector can be difficult to navigate at times and those in school business management play a pivotal role in steering schools to success. Tasked with everything from finance and procurement to HR and admin, you keep the education cogs turning.

Education Executive addresses the most pressing matters faced by SBMs, offers meaningful insight and practical advice – essentially, all you need to run your school. Our contributors, made up of the *Education Executive* team and sector innovators and experts, offer invaluable business insights from the sidelines and frontline.



CARLY WOOD
Editorial team
Education Executive



SUE BIRCHALL
SBM
The Malling School



WORKING SBM (@WORKINGSBM2017)
SBM and blogger
Workingsbm.com



NAOMI CLEWS
Independent procurement consultant
Naomi Clews Consultancy



STEPHEN MITCHELL
Chief operating officer
Spencer Academies Trust



SAM FINCH
Please fill info in here Jan -
features in leading from the front
xxx

Education Executive is the first business management magazine written exclusively for school business managers and bursars, bringing you the latest issues affecting your role, from finance to premises, procurement to HR. *EdExec* delivers the lowdown on all the hottest topics in education management right here, every month.

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Design
Graphic designer
Amanda Lancaster
alancasterdesign.com

Sales
Head of sales
Vicki Baloch
vicki.baloch@intelligentmedia.co.uk

Publisher
Vicki Baloch
vicki@intelligentmedia.co.uk

We want to hear from you!

Is your school doing something wonderful? Do you have an opinion or experience you'd like to share? A story suggestion? Or some advice you'd like to share with your peers? Get in touch – email vicki@intelligentmedia.co.uk

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NEWS



Ofsted publishes new inspection framework

Ofsted's consultation on the new inspection framework has concluded, and the organisation has published its outcomes. The changes follow a three-month public consultation, which prompted more than 15,000 responses – the highest number Ofsted has ever received, and the new framework will take effect in September.

Ofsted will refocus inspections of schools, early years settings and further education and skills providers, to make sure that learners are receiving a high-quality education that puts them on a path to future success. Inspectors will spend less time looking at exam results and test data, and more time considering how a nursery, school, college – or other education provider – has achieved their results.

All inspection judgements will continue to be awarded under the 4-point grading scale – outstanding, good, requires improvement

and inadequate. The aim is that schools will be empowered to always put the child first and will be discouraged from negative practices such as 'off-rolling', where schools remove pupils in their own best interests, rather than pupils'. Such schools are likely to find their 'leadership and management' judged 'inadequate' under the new framework.

"Ofsted's new approach to school inspections is a step in the right direction, but it is not a panacea for all the problems with the inspection system and there is plenty more work to do in the future," said Geoff Barton, general secretary of the ASCL. "In particular, it cannot be fair or sensible to continue with the blunt instrument of graded judgements which stigmatise schools with the greatest challenges – making it harder for them to recruit teachers and leaders and to secure sustainable improvement."

Pupils losing out on millions in free school meal money

Disadvantaged secondary school pupils are missing out on school meals they're entitled to, according to Citizens UK. The charity says that these pupils are losing out on tens of millions of pounds every year in unspent lunch funding.

Its investigation shows that free school meal money unspent by a pupil (due to absence) is retained by the school meal provider and not in the pupil's account for future use. Allegedly, the loss could be worth as much as £65m – although the DfE has disputed this.

Currently, approximately 750,000 secondary school pupils in the UK are entitled to free school meals. Citizens UK says that around 20% of free school meals go unclaimed every school day.

Pupils are now leading a campaign to highlight the problem of stigmatisation regarding free school meals.



Children on reduced timetables missing out on education

As reported by the *Irish Times*, many children are being denied a full education due to being placed on reduced timetables. Later this month, the committee on education will hold a hearing regarding this practice.

Special needs and traveller community groups describe the issue as 'illegal' and a 'growing crisis'.

These reduced timetables cut down the hours that certain children are allowed to attend school – usually in order to 'manage a behavioural issue' – with some pupils in school for as little as 30 minutes a day.

The DfE has stated that reducing timetables shouldn't be used in this way, but groups – such as the Irish Traveller Movement, Inclusion Ireland and Aslam – are saying this is happening, regardless, even without parental consent.

Additionally, because the children are recorded as being present in school, the reduced hours are not being reported to the proper authorities, meaning that no true data is being collected on this practice.



Are school test concerns too much for six and seven-year-olds?

As reported by the *BBC*, the children's commissioner for Wales, Sally Holland, has stated that the purpose of school tests for six and seven-year-olds needs a 'really good look'.

She said she had hoped that moving the assessments online would reduce pressure on children, but a recent survey of 7,000 pupils showed that stress over tests is a top concern. Holland said she was 'surprised' by this.

The purpose of moving the tests online was to allow schools more flexibility around when they are scheduled. However, the aforementioned survey showed that tests were an even bigger worry for seven to 11-year-olds than bullying.

"It's hard to know whether the children were feeling the pressure from the school, their parents or, perhaps, even from other children," Holland said, adding that it could have an

impact on confidence and self-esteem.

Holland is now questioning whether these tests should be introduced so early. "I'm not convinced that six or seven-year-olds need to be practising for external exams – just dealing with every day knocks, of school and friendships and learning itself," she explained. ■



News in brief

■ A once 'outstanding' secondary school in Bury has now been placed in special measures. As reported by the *Manchester Evening News*, St Gabriel's fell victim to a damning Ofsted report in February – a far cry from its 'outstanding' inspection in September 2011.

■ Parents of year two pupils at Bealings School in Suffolk have shown their feelings about SATs by boycotting the tests. According to *BBC News*, the parents said that 'over-testing was ruining the pupils' education', amidst a wave of news stories debating whether six and seven-year-olds are too young for the tests.

■ As reported by *The Telegraph*, Damian Hinds has said children in England should learn about the contribution of ethnic minorities to history. Speaking in response to calls to 'decolonise' the curriculum, Hinds said he wants schools to teach subjects from a less white, male, Euro-centric perspective.

Fast figures

20% Around 20% of free school meals go unclaimed every school day

Call for evidence on SEND provision

The DfE is asking schools for their views on how to make funding arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities more effective

A call for evidence on the funding arrangements for pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) has been launched by education secretary Damian Hinds.

As the needs of children are changing, the support that schools are providing reflects this additional complexity. There are now almost 120,000 pupils with education, health and care plans who are continuing their education in mainstream schools, while the number of pupils whose needs are being met in special schools has risen to more than 112,000 in the last five years.

“I want to make sure we have the best understanding of how our system for funding children with high needs is operating on the ground – and whether there are improvements we can make so every pound of public money we spend is building opportunities for young

people,” said Hinds.

“I’ve made clear that I will back headteachers to have the resources they need to provide the best education possible for every child; that ambition is no different for children with SEND, nor should it be. So, I hope teachers and leaders will work with me to lead a system that unlocks every child’s potential.”

FUNDING CRISIS

The DfE says it will work with all those involved in the SEND system to hear how it can work better to improve outcomes for young people – and whether funding could be distributed more effectively.

Education bodies have welcomed the move – but remain wary that the call for evidence isn’t a promise of increased funding.

“The picture facing schools supporting children with SEN is bleak. Not only are school budgets at breaking point, but there have also been severe cuts to local authority health and social care provision.

Schools are left struggling to meet the needs of our most vulnerable pupils,” said Paul Whiteman, general secretary of NAHT.

“We absolutely welcome the secretary of state’s focus on this issue; the overall funding crisis cannot be solved without getting to grips with SEN support. A call for evidence is welcome – as the issue is complex – but, ultimately, the solution is simple – more money from the treasury is urgently needed, both for schools and health and social care services,” he continued.

“For too long, children with SEND have been disgracefully let down by this government. This ministerial review of SEND funding must prove to be a real step towards providing funding levels that allow SEND students to

For too long, children with SEND have been disgracefully let down by this government

flourish,” added Rosamund McNeil, assistant general secretary of the NEU.

“It is time for government to acknowledge that the number of children and young people with severe and complex needs has risen by a third since 2015, whilst funding for the high needs sector has only increased by 7%. This funding shortfall has led to pupils with SEND missing out on £1.2bn of specialist provision.” ■

More information

The call for evidence will run until 31 July. Participate at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/send-and-ap-provision-call-for-evidence.

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A DIFFERENCE AND THAT'S
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Barbara Daykin, CEO
Endeavour Academy Trust, Bristol

Barbara Daykin is a former headteacher and now CEO to four schools within the Endeavour Academy Trust. We spoke to her about her experiences in school improvement.

It starts with a strategy

“As a Trust we're immersed in quite a number of different aspects of Teach First's strategic work and I feel that's all to our benefit.”

Support is key

“It's important to build your support network and don't be afraid to ask for help. It comes from Teach First, it comes from the universities and it comes from the school, so you know there's a really good structure of support there.”

It's not easy

“What you're doing is building capacity in your own school. Given the difficulty in recruiting good teachers, the chance to train them for yourself, along with other professional partners, is really valuable.”

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TeachFirst



SPOTLIGHT ON

Landmark exclusions review published

Edward Timpson's review of exclusions makes 30 recommendations to ensure exclusions are used appropriately, and that the government commits to new school accountability. The analysis also uncovers some pupil and school characteristics associated with a greater risk of exclusion



Schools will be made accountable for the pupils they exclude, and there will be a clampdown on 'off-rolling', as part of government measures taken in response to the *Timpson review of school exclusion*.

Published in May, the review makes 30 recommendations to government as it highlights variation in exclusion practice across different schools, local authorities and certain groups of children. The report concludes that, while there is no optimal number of exclusions, there needs to be action to ensure permanent exclusions are only used as a last resort.

EXCLUSION DATA

The analysis shows 85% of all mainstream schools not permanently excluding a single child in 2016/17, but 0.2% of schools having permanently excluded more than 10 pupils in the same year. In addition, some pupil and school characteristics are associated with greater risk of exclusion, even after

controlling for other factors which could influence exclusions. In particular:

- **78%** of pupils who are permanently excluded either have SEN, are classified as in need or are eligible for free school meals. **11%** of permanently excluded children have all three characteristics.
- Boys with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) but no statement were around **3.8** times more likely to be permanently excluded than a non-SEN child, while girls were around three times more likely after controlling for other factors.
- Children in receipt of free school meals were around **45%** more likely to be excluded than other pupils.
- Black Caribbean pupils were around **1.7** times more likely – and mixed white and black Caribbean children around **1.6** times more likely – to be permanently excluded, compared to white British children. Indian and Bangladeshi pupils were around half as likely to be permanently excluded.
- Children on a children in need plan were around **four** times more likely to be permanently excluded, compared to those with no social care classification.
- Children who had a child protection plan were around **3.5** times more likely to be permanently excluded – and looked after children were around **2.3** times as likely to be permanently excluded – as children who had never been supported by social care.

CONSULTATION

The DfE welcomed the review and agreed to all 30 recommendations, in principle. Addressing Timpson's recommendation that changes should be made to strengthen accountability around the use of exclusions, the government announced that it will launch a consultation later this year.

There needs to be action to ensure permanent exclusions are only used as a last resort

This is set to include how to make schools accountable in the most effective and fair way, so they can fulfil their responsibilities for permanently excluded children – this may include through reform to commissioning and funding arrangements for alternative provision (AP). ■

Fast figures

85% of schools did not permanently exclude any pupils in 2016/17

0.2% of schools permanently excluded more than 10 pupils in 2016/17

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Samantha Crane
Tudor CofE Primary School

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SLT: reserve team

In addition to increasing workloads, school business managers are taking on increasing levels of responsibility, too. While many SBMs now make up part of their school's senior leadership team (SLT) in recognition of this responsibility, some are still being kept on the side-lines. We asked, what will it take for all SBMs to be recognised as vital members of SLTs? The responses came in thick and fast, including some great advice for those not yet on their school's SLT





Cate Hart
SBL consultant

With an increasing plea for SBLs to be included on the SLT, the question has to be asked: are all those with the title ready for this inclusion? It's not an easy question to ask, without suggesting a lack of ability. Being part of the SLT gives SBLs a crucial oversight of the whole school operation – every aspect – and SBLs need to know everything – curriculum planning, changes to staffing, need for classrooms, SEN, CPD, etc. Only when armed with a complete overview can SBLs form balanced and well-judged scenarios for budgets, HR needs, buildings, and so on.

A great starting point is to look at the ISBL professional standards, using these to identify where SBLs fit on the four tiers. The tiered approach identifies the difference between operational and leadership qualities. It differentiates between tier one: contribution to a process – with some direct responsibility for tasks or an element of a team; and tier four: accountability for strategic leadership – committed to system leadership and the improvement of the sector.

SBLs may not be included on the SLT for a number of reasons, including:

- The head doesn't recognise the input which could contribute to whole school decisions.
- The head may not have worked with a great SBL before.
- The SBL may not be experienced/well-qualified/have leadership skills – but could have, with training and coaching.
- The SBL has never contributed at strategic level before.
- The SBL has only ever carried out instructions on operational level, and has not

presented a rationale for decision-making. Make a case for being on the SLT by:

- Pulling together evidence of strategic input, not the volume of work done.
- Presenting research you have done which will affect the school, eg. the new Ofsted framework.
- Evidencing your leadership of teams and the impact this is having on outcomes.
- Demonstrating the knowledge of the whole school business and how this has impacted decisions or recommendations you have made.
- Measuring your responsibility against others on the SLT, eg. line management, planning, size of budget, etc.
- Outlining your CPD and where you see yourself on the ISBL professional standards tiers.

Saving the school money is not, *per se*, a leadership quality – but the methods used to plan, analyse, react to change and provide for the future are. Ask to sit in on SLT meetings to see how you can contribute – not just when there is a small agenda item relevant to your role.

There are too many SBLs not on the SLT who should be, and a drive to remedy this is needed.

There are too many SBLs not on the SLT who should be, and a drive to remedy this is needed



Lisa Bower
SBM
Rose Hill Primary
School

Over the 10 years that I have been working as a SBM the role has changed significantly. This has meant it is not only difficult for us to keep up, but also for headteachers. Gone are the days of the SBM being the person counting the dinner money. The change in role has meant that being a member of the SLT is crucial; putting together a school budget without understanding the school's key teaching and learning priorities would be

almost impossible. Let's be honest – every SLT sometimes needs a voice of reason!

I am lucky – my role is understood within the school – however, for many schools this is not yet the case. Educating headteachers and senior leadership teams in understanding what a business manager can do for a school is crucial. We, as a profession, also need to continue to make ourselves heard locally and nationally. ►



Nickii Messer
School management and leadership
trainer and consultant

Answering 'What will it take for all SBMs to be recognised as vital members of SLTs?' really is a big ask! Firstly, I fervently believe that schools don't need SBMs, and certainly don't need SBMs on their SLTs. What schools and SLTs do need are high-quality, highly-effective, entrepreneurial, strategic, passionate, skilled, knowledgeable, professional – I could go on! – SBMs, with integrity running through their spine. These are the colleagues that schools deserve on their SLTs, and nothing less.

I make this point because, overall, the profession has – to put it bluntly – become diluted. In my work, I meet many 'SBMs' who work hard, care deeply about their schools, are kind and caring people but, at best, are good administrators – not managers, despite their titles, and certainly not leaders. Understandably, many high-level SBMs now choose to differentiate themselves by changing their title to SBL; after all, to be a member of the senior leadership team, it's obvious that you have to be a leader – isn't it?

The profession is at a tipping point. The ISBL is clearly working hard to establish professional imperatives and pathways, but I think we need to drive this from a broader, school leadership base. Heads, deputies and governors all need to be on board to establish what their schools need – with the SBM profession focusing on providing this above all else.

I don't like being negative so will end on a positive note! I know many truly inspirational SBMs (whatever their titles) and I hold onto the hope that these colleagues will continue to be role models and advocates for a profession that I still passionately believe in and continue to work hard to support.



Maggie Duncan
SBM
The Redeemer
CEP

While it is great that we are making huge steps nationally, and being recognised by the major educational unions and the DfE, our struggles are often with those whom we work with every day. Schools are great at implementing changes to curriculum practice but, I believe, not so good at changing mindsets. This takes time and effort – both of which are in short supply, with increased workload and accountability.

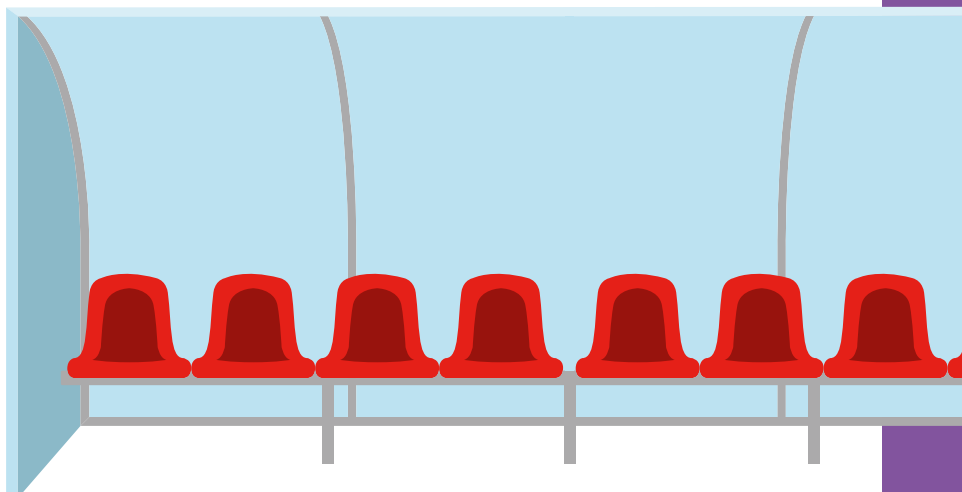
In my experience it has been teaching colleagues – and I must emphasise that these have been in the minority – who dismiss your place on the SLT. This may be because our profession started as the 'school secretary', and the individual believes that we are 'only' support staff, or maybe they are intimidated by a non-teaching professional; whatever the reason, it is our job to re-educate them.

I believe that we do this by proving how important the role is. Do this by ensuring you are seen – seen being the important word here – to be doing all of the same activities as your SLT colleagues, including governors' meetings, break duty, school discos, Sunday church attendance, being an out-of-hours contact, being a key holder, etc. Those that I line manage also call me if they are going to be absent. I bear witness to conversations, attend appeal hearings and stand up and talk about the business functions of the school at prospective parent/induction evenings.

You also need to know about your school – make time to spend with your SLT colleagues to understand your school data and the issues they face every day, even if this favour is not being returned.

It is a hard slog, particularly when you already have an overwhelming workload, but the reward comes in the form of a great SLT, which can only benefit the children in our care – which is why we are here, isn't it?

To be a member
of the senior
leadership team,
it's obvious that
you have to be a
leader – isn't it?





Helen Burge
Academy
business leader
St Anne's Church
Academy and
Little Learners
Nursery

Identify what the obstacles actually are to you joining the SLT; don't rely on your perception as it might be skewed, or even wrong – talk to the individuals involved. Listen to their concerns – there could be any number of reasons. Find them out, without challenging those concerns. Try and see it from their point of view – what would they need to know in order to change their mind – then create yourself an action plan to develop your case for persuading your headteacher to let you join the SLT.

As part of this process you will need to create a gap analysis between your current impact (use your appraisal process, rate yourself against the ISBL professional standards and highlight how you are contributing towards the school improvement plan) and your potential future impact if you were involved with the SLT.

Now you know your gaps, work out how you are going to address them. Find a mentor to help you develop your action plan; this might be a colleague within your local SBL network group or a governor. Attend SBL network meetings and talk to others about their SLT involvement; find out how they got on their SLT, find out how they demonstrated their impact and how they are now continuing to make a positive impact on their SLT.

Be patient, but realistic – holding out until the current headteacher retires in five years shouldn't be a solution! Have Bing Crosby singing in your ears: *'Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative'* when you identify the gaps, create your action plan and – most importantly – when you are having those persuasive conversations. Finally, why not suggest a trial period of attending SLT meetings? Good luck!



Tina Button
SBM
The Wyvern
School

I think it is vital for SBLs to be part of their school's SLT. Strategic planning is a huge part of our role; how can we do that without being part of the team that considers how the school is going to move forward?

I strongly believe that more and more headteachers are seeing the benefit of having their SBL by their side at SLT meetings to help plan both organisational and strategic change. This cannot be done without careful planning and, with SBLs having such a huge range of knowledge around the school's budget, staffing and site management, this can ensure a truly joined up approach to the school development plan.

Those SBLs who are not yet members of

A school's SBL should be able to lead on everything that isn't teaching and learning

their SLT need to work on their headteachers.

- Show them the difference you can make to the decision-making process in school.
- Show them how you can support the school in making cost-savings and then reinvesting those savings in other areas.
- Show them how you can support the writing of the school development plan.
- Show them how, through networking with other SBLs in the local area, you can come up with ideas and suggestions to help school improvement.

Increasingly, the ISBL, NAHT and ASCL are encouraging headteachers to consider the benefits of a good SBL. I recently attended a presentation on 'What can your SBL do for you?' – and the answer was – lots! They just need to be given the opportunity. A school's SBL should be able to lead on everything that isn't teaching and learning – leaving the headteacher to concentrate on that, knowing a competent professional is dealing with everything else. ■

BREAK THE HABIT!



Switching and saving is not a new concept – but is it one you have considered for your resources spend? Although it might seem like a small amount of your budget, there is a competitive market out there ready and waiting to save you money. Now, *GLS Educational Supplies* is taking the headache out of shopping around – by doing it for you. Use the one-day price comparison service to find out how much you could save – and break the habit today!

You may have noticed some familiar faces – or, more likely, some familiar Twitter names! – appearing as part of GLS Educational Supplies'

My SBM Life and Smarter SBM series. Over the last year GLS has been putting you at the heart of its campaign to celebrate not only the launch of its Smart Ordering solution, but also the role that SBMs play in schools.

Serving as a snapshot of the issues affecting business managers, the series has covered essential CPD, managing finances, tackling difficult conversations, what makes a good SBM – and more. The campaign received the seal of approval earlier this year when it was crowned the winner of Marketing Campaign of the Year at The Education Resources Awards 2019, which is judged by a panel of experts, most of whom are teaching professionals.

Now, GLS wants you! In the ever-evolving SBM landscape, there's always more knowledge to share, best practice to discuss and hints and tips to divulge – so, get involved and have your say! GLS is continuing its campaign and is looking for more SBMs – be they individuals or SBM networks – keen to share their stories, experiences and day-to-day musings to get onboard.

CHAMPIONING THE SBM

That's not all GLS is doing to fly the flag for SBMs. Championing all the hard work you do, the company is delighted to sponsor the School Business Manager of the Year category at this year's prestigious TES Schools Awards. The category is new this year and GLS believes it's high time the vital role of SBMs is recognised in this way.

The company is also responding to the importance of CPD within the profession





and is currently finalising the details of a partnership to run a competition where a development bursary of up to £2,000 will be on offer for an aspiring SBM or business manager wanting to progress to the next level.

As part of GLS' efforts to save schools time and money – and following extensive interaction with the SBM community – a white paper on smarter procurement is also on the way. A compilation of SBM pain points, barriers, frustrations, shared knowledge, teaching and learning – all garnered from honest discussions with business managers – the white paper will bring best practice procurement together in one handy document – rather than looking here, there and everywhere for hints and tips to claw back some time and budget.

Keep your eyes peeled for more information – and for details of an event set to take place later this year, designed to bring the SBM community together to meet the faces behind those Twitter names!

SMALL CHANGES, BIG SAVINGS

GLS has also been working tirelessly to bring you cost savings on your school supplies. In addition to slashing the price of 800 everyday essentials, the company wants to shake up, what can be habitual, buying practices when it comes to resources.

The percentage of your budget spent on this area of procurement isn't massive – usually around two to three per cent – so you might find yourself pushing it to the bottom of your 'to-do list' when it comes to cost-cutting practices and focusing on aspects like utilities expenditure instead. However, there are huge savings to be had in this area – all you need to do is question whether you're getting enough bang for your buck with your current supplier.

We are all familiar with the concept of shopping around for the best deals and, as a £1 billion industry in the UK, there is plenty of choice out there when it comes to your resources spend. What's more, the expansion of digital and online shopping has opened up a wealth of national suppliers among what is, currently, a regionally-driven market.

GLS understands that, for SBMs, time – and money – is of the essence, so the company

We are all familiar with the concept of shopping around for the best deals

offers a price comparison service to show you where you could be saving money – and it does the hard work for you! Simply send your current suppliers' order form to GLS and, within 24 hours, you will receive a comparison with potential cost savings in return. This is part of GLS' dedication to offer SBMs an open, honest and transparent service – all you need to do is

make the decision to switch!

Speaking of switching, have you considered buying own-brand? Much like your weekly shop, there are savings to be made on own-brand school supplies – without compromising on quality. GLS' Classmates range has been independently quality tested and offers savings of up to 45%.

SEE WHAT YOU'RE MISSING

A whole host of 'smart' online features await your school office within GLS' Smart Ordering, all intended to make it faster, smoother and more affordable to get the supplies you need. These include:

- **Smart Connect** – join more than 3,500 SBMs already using Smart Connect and take the hard work out of getting orders signed off. It's free to use, easy to set up and can reduce paperwork and improve financial efficiency – saving you up to five hours per week.
- **Quick Order** – create your basket in no time at all. Simply upload a spreadsheet containing the codes for every item you need and do away with the time-consuming practice of keying-in individual product codes.
- **Share Basket** – colleagues can request the supplies they need by email, rather than leaving notes on your desk which have the potential to contain errors or go missing!
- **Repeat Order** – save time by recreating your previous baskets in just one click. No need to re-key the codes for the products you buy the most. ■



Want to learn more?

Visit www.glsed.co.uk to break the habit and start saving today!





PLASTIC -not so fantastic

Schools have been challenged to eliminate their use of single-use plastics by 2022. *EdExec* looks at some of the great work carried out by staff and pupils at Georgeham Primary School, in Devon, which led it to become the UK's first school with plastic-free status

At the end of last year the education secretary, Damian Hinds, called on all schools to go single-use plastic-free by 2022 – by ditching items such as plastic bags, straws, bottles and food packaging in favour of sustainable alternatives. He also encouraged schools to help children learn more about the effects discarded plastics

have on the environment and wildlife.

In his announcement, on 27 December 2018, Hinds urged schools to follow the lead of Georgeham CofE Primary School, in Devon, which – in March 2018 – became the first school in the UK to achieve single-use plastic-free status. Awarded by Surfers Against Sewage (SAS), a national marine conservation and campaigning charity, schools must complete

five objectives before receiving plastic-free status.

“Plastic can harm our precious environment and be lethal to wildlife. The leadership shown by schools like Georgeham Primary in going single-use plastic-free is an impressive example for us all – and I want work to support every school in the country in following their lead by 2022,” Hinds said.

“It’s not always easy but we all have a role to play in driving out avoidable plastic waste and, with more schools joining others and leading by example, we can help to leave our planet in a better state than we found it.”

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Georgeham Primary’s journey to plastic-free status included efforts from school staff, pupils and parents. In addition to organising beach cleans, making contact with local councillors and MPs and spreading the school’s message far and wide through press coverage and radio interviews – the school shunned single-use plastic across the premises. Soap dispensers in the bathrooms were swapped for soap bars, for example, and eco-glitter is used in place of standard plastic products.

All of our pupils enthusiastically played their part in helping the school reduce excessive single-use plastic consumption

A lot of the work took place in the school’s kitchen. Headteacher Julian Thomas praises the school’s catering manager, Keri Lambert, for playing a key role in reducing the use of plastic. Single-serve foodstuffs in pots – such as yogurt, ice cream and fruit – have been replaced with larger tubs. The containers are then repurposed around the school as classroom storage, for use during craft activities or to hold other food items. Keri also spoke to

the school’s wholesalers, producers and suppliers to request items to be sent, unwrapped, in boxes, and the likes of milk cartons, cling film and sauce sachets have all been replaced with alternatives.

MINOR CHANGES

“All our pupils enthusiastically played their part in helping the school reduce excessive single-use plastic consumption,” says Julian. “I am confident children across the rest of the country would also welcome the challenge.

“By making relatively minor changes, such as replacing cling film for foil in the canteen, we were able to significantly reduce our plastic use in the school. We’re a small school, but we think big, and I’m very proud of everyone at Georgeham for what we’ve achieved.” ■

How did Georgeham Primary do it?

Some of the initiatives and projects implemented at Georgeham Primary in their bid to receive single-use plastic-free status included:

- An audit to identify waste across the school.
- Organising local beach cleans.
- Litter-picks on the school grounds.
- Replacing individual milk cartons with recyclable milk containers and washable beakers.
- Reusing large food tubs – for example ice cream and yogurt tubs – around the school, for crafts in classes, storage in classrooms, containing salads, and even in next door’s greenhouse!
- Contacting the local MP and presenting to Devon County Council.
- Newspaper coverage and radio interviews.
- Contacting the school’s suppliers to arrange delivery in boxes, with items unwrapped.
- Banishing cling film.
- The use of pump containers, in place of sauce sachets.
- Offering hand stamps, rather than stickers with plastic backing.

Surfers Against Sewage’s five steps to plastic-free status

1. **Objective one** requires pupils to work collectively towards a shared goal, acknowledging the roles they play as citizens of both a school environment and wider community.
2. **Objective two** requires pupils to gather the evidence and information they have acquired so far and effectively communicate it to their peers and wider community via the medium of a school assembly and online press release.
3. **Objective three** requires pupils to extend their plastic-free schools campaign beyond the classroom, contacting outside companies to ask what more can be done to reduce the amount of single-use plastic being used in their school.

4. **Objective four** encourages pupils to recognise the role they play as a citizen of their community. Pupils are asked to discuss the role their local councillors and MPs play and to contact them in relation to the evidence they have been collecting.
5. **Objective five** sees pupils organise – and take part in – a school litter pick. Pupils will delve further into the items collected, connecting them to the brands, and discussing what more could be done by manufacturers to reduce the amount of plastic waste generated. Pupils then send a message to industry asking them to do more.

For more information, visit www.sas.org.uk/plastic-free-schools.

Leading from the front: SAM FINCH

With a career spanning schools in independent, state, primary, secondary, academy, MAT, SEN, AP and SEMH settings, SAM FINCH's experience allows her to look at school business management from every angle. CARLY WOOD caught up with her to find out more about her leadership style

“Budget, budget, budget – always budget!” This is the – familiar – response I receive when I ask Sam Finch, school business manager at Sale High School in Manchester, what major challenges she has faced in her working life. “Budgets get tighter year-on-year. With teachers’ salaries increasing significantly last year, and the teachers’ pension increase looming, it’s now always about forward projection.”

A varied background in business management has equipped Sam with the experience and knowhow required to tackle such challenges. Following nine years in the

motor trade as a sales executive and business manager, Sam moved into the school business management profession, taking up the role of bursar at an independent school in 2010. “I loved the role immensely. The school was in deficit when I joined and I worked tirelessly to ensure good financial management – returning the school to a safe and profitable business,” she explains.

“I wanted to safeguard my future – especially ensuring a pension – so I decided to move into the state sector. I joined a large high school as their marketing and communications manager in order to gain more experience of the state sector.”

SUCCESSFUL FREE SCHOOL BID

From there, Sam joined a special primary school as the SBM. “This was one of the highlights of my career – the children made every day a joy,” she says. After two years, and an outstanding Ofsted inspection, she moved over to the academy setting, joining a secondary, alternative provision (AP) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) school. “This school was amazing and was set up to teach the children who mainstream schools deemed unteachable.” During her time with the school, she was involved in writing the bid for a new free school. Hundreds of schools applied, and Sam’s school was selected for interview alongside three others. “We had only been open two and a half years at the time, so being selected for an interview was a real honour.

“Alongside the principal and two governors, I attended the interview. We were grilled and I had to know my budget like the back of my hand – but a few months later we got the call to say we had been successful; the SEN free school opens in 2020.”

Another Ofsted inspection followed, the first for that school. “We were graded outstanding – a fantastic achievement, not only for a first inspection, but also for an AP school,” she says. “We duly formed a MAT and moved into the primary sector, bringing in some primary provision.”

Due to the nature of its cohort – 60 students in the main school, nine in the primary provisions and 24, moving to 40, to be placed in the SEN school – the MAT was particularly small. For this reason, Sam decided she was ready for her next challenge, moving on to join her current school as SBM. Sam says the experience she has gained from working in such an eclectic mixture of school settings allows her to “look at things from every possible angle”.

ENSURING BUDGETS ARE SPENT EFFICIENTLY

“It also allows me to work with a variety of different funding streams and students and understand them and their needs,” she continues. “Funding for special educational needs and pupil premium is vital to schools to ensure that students have the best possible education. My previous experience allows me to look, in depth, at our funding to ensure, not only that the correct amount is being

received, but that it is also going to the right departmental budgets and being spent efficiently.”

It’s that familiar ‘budget, budget, budget’ again! How does Sam approach it? “I build a three-year budget and, once mandatory income and expenditure is written in, I look at it and consider how this can help the school to achieve its vision. In times of ever-tightening school budgets, looking for grant income is imperative. In both my previous academy and special school I wrote successful bids, which helped the schools to further broaden their curriculums in line with their visions and development plans.

Sam says it is also imperative to ensure best value – by sourcing new contracts and never letting anything auto-renew. She is always on the lookout for initiatives and has taken advantage of the government’s regional schools buying hub during its recent pilot period. “As an example, my current school had been with the same insurer for years; I went to 2Buy2 [the hub for the north west] and spoke to other insurers for annual quotes – and saved our school circa £6,000 on this year’s insurance.”

ALWAYS SET GOALS

Through her efforts she has returned financial stability to three schools now, overcoming budget deficits – her current school is just coming out of a deficit. “It is my vision to see the school thriving and financially-balanced once more.”

“I like to lead projects to a successful end goal with my team,” she continues. “It’s so motivational seeing the school budget help to drive the school forward, and knowing this is happening through good financial planning.”

With two outstanding Ofsted reports under her belt, and the financial turnaround of several schools to be proud of, Sam says she evaluates success through achieving goals, having a happy team of staff with high morale and seeing happy students with good school attendance rates.

“On a personal level, I aspire to be the best that I can be. Being a single mum with three young children when I commenced this role 10 years ago, studying my AAT accounting qualification and DSBM, whilst also working ▶

Always set goals – having something to aim for always pushes me that little bit more



full time – to now, managing a large high school with 90 staff and coming out of deficit, gives me a huge sense of pride and achievement. Always set goals – having something to aim for always pushes me that little bit more,” she adds.

Describing her leadership style as “honest, friendly, passionate, caring and respectful”, Sam explains how she works with her team to achieve effective performance management. “I ensure they feel valued and help them to achieve their goals through, for example, CPD. I try and ensure our office is a pleasant place to work and never shy away from putting the kettle on – sometimes the smallest things mean the most – and I try never to micromanage – staff need to breathe.”

KNOWLEDGE-SHARING

In terms of continued learning and development – both of staff and personally – Sam explains, “I am a huge believer in coaching and mentoring – working in collaboration with colleagues in similar roles has always been a good starting point too. It allows the transfer of skills between staff in similar roles – they can brainstorm and look at overcoming any current difficulties within their roles, leaning on each other’s experience.

“I also believe upskilling staff encourages learning and development – work with your

staff to achieve their five-year goals. This may mean you lose staff along the way to other career opportunities, but always keep your relationship with them open. A very good friend of mine today is, actually, the first admin member of staff I appointed 10 years ago – she is now the office manager and still knows she can message me if ever she gets stuck!”

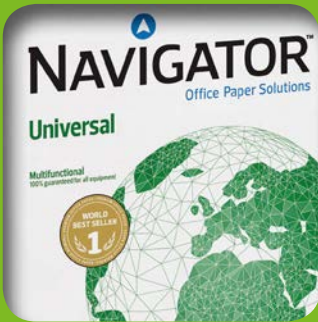
As for her own five-year goal, Sam is hoping to make it a hat trick of Ofsted outstanding reports. “My school is currently Ofsted ‘good’ and I want to be part of the team, as per my previous schools, that makes this school outstanding – because it truly is.” She also hopes to become a school resource management adviser (SRMA). “I thrive on helping others and, having now worked with three schools with deficit budgets, I want to help outline to others how they, too, can achieve this,” she adds. “I really want to share the knowledge I have gained over the last decade.” ■

It’s so motivational seeing the school budget help to drive the school forward, and knowing this is happening through good financial planning

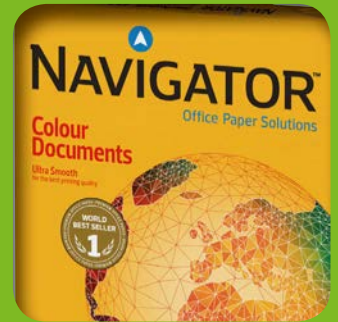
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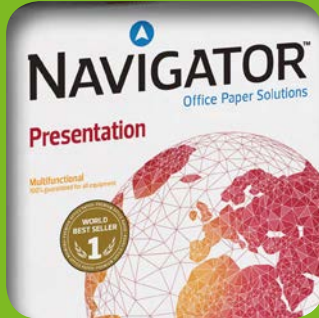
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BE THE CHANGE

Spend more time than you'd like purchasing for your school? Tired of having to make difficult decisions when it comes to purchasing goods and services? Smarter procurement maximises resources so schools can invest in what's important - high-quality education for students. But what does it look like? *EdExec*, in partnership with GLS educational supplies, is on a mission to find out, and we need your insights

On average, three-quarters of a school's budget is spent on staff; the remainder funds all other areas – from the back office, facilities management and catering to IT and classroom provisions. The pressure is on school budgets, and those who manage them and, in addition to doing more with (in real terms) less – as budgets are curbed by increasing staff and operational costs – schools are being asked to make savings.

Getting procurement right, and right for you and your school, is increasingly important to achieving best value-for-money in the long-term. However, it can be an onerous and time-consuming undertaking that, most often, falls to school business managers. This is why is teaming up with supplies experts GLS to identify how schools can – and in many cases are – procuring smarter by considering the challenges schools face when purchasing and identifying how this function can be streamlined to improve efficiency, reduce costs and save time for SBMs and support staff.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

In Financial sustainability in schools, a 2017 report published by the National Audit Office (NAO), Amyas Morse, the NAO's head, advised that mainstream schools would need to make £3 billion in 'efficiency savings' by 2019-20 - this against a backdrop of increasing pupil numbers,

real-terms reductions in per pupil funding and the issue of increasing on-costs. According to the Department for Education (DfE), on a per pupil basis, these pressures are estimated at around eight per cent by 2019-20.

The same report estimated that £1.7 billion could be saved by managing staff more efficiently and a further £1.3 billion could be clawed back through better procurement.

At the time Morse also recognised that, while the DfE expected schools to 'finance high standards by making savings, and operating more efficiently', it had 'not yet completed its work to help schools secure crucial procurement and workforce savings'.

Since then action has been taken. In April 2018 a new national funding formula for schools in England was introduced. Although less ambitious than originally intended, the funding reform seeks to ensure similar local authorities receive similar levels of funding per pupil. However, there are some who feel this is not the 'fair' formula promised, warning that some schools will be adversely affected.

In April this year Tom Goldman, deputy director for the DfE's funding policy unit, told the Schools and Academies Show in London that budgets for 2019-20 will leave schools 'with real pressures to face', and he acknowledged some schools would face 'tighter' finances under the new national funding formula.

Share your experience and be in with a chance to win a £200 Spa Breaks gift card!

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

But the show must go on; schools must continue to deliver high-standards of education – despite dwindling resources. Budgets must be stretched and managed, and the government's answer is to push schools and academies to 'get the best value for every pound spent'.

The case for efficiency is a simple one: effective schools make the best use of resources, which improves standards and ensures maximum impact. This requires the planning of educational improvement to be integrated with finances; it requires streamlined processes that facilitate smarter procurement which are understood across the school community. However, this can be time-consuming – and time is another resource that's in short supply in the busy school environment.

Responsibility for the procurement of goods and services tends to fall on SBMs – as well as the million other tasks that they must juggle. SBMs find themselves between 'a rock and a hard place' - with direct responsibility for commercial efficiency while lacking appropriate support - and find themselves faced with an overwhelming task, whittling down an overwhelming product choice and dealing the immense pressure of balancing cost against quality in order to achieve value.

How do you procure to make efficiency savings - in terms of time and money - while continuing to deliver and improve standards for pupils? Focus on smarter procurement.

Effective schools make the best use of resources, which improves standards and ensures maximum impact

NOT ABOUT SMART, BUT SMARTER

Smarter procurement secures financial savings that can be re-invested in your school, ensures goods and services are fit-for-purpose – delivered by suppliers, as agreed, while financial obligations are complied with - saving time and effort along the way. Despite changes in how schools are managed, and the ongoing professionalisation of the role, procurement procedures are sometimes undermined by habitual purchasing or difficulties embedding best practice.

While SBMs have a deep understanding of the sector – no-one is more attuned to the state of funding in UK schools and academies, the importance of smarter procurement or the nuances and regulations around procurement - smarter procurement is a school-wide commitment and we want to crack it, define it and make it practical and practicable.

We want to identify the pinch points for SBMs on a daily basis. For example, what would a streamlined process that can save you time look like? Would improved CPD help you to manage the procurement process? Would it help engage other members of the wider school community? Essentially, how can schools save time and procure at best-value.

To this end, we're undertaking research to examine the areas that SBMs find most challenging and identify how the procurement function can be streamlined to improve efficiency, reduce costs and give you back some time; our findings will be published in a white paper and shared with the sector.

We're gathering the insights and experiences of those on the frontline who undertake, and engage with, the procurement process on a daily basis, so please make sure that you take our smarter procurement survey and look out for the research when published. ■

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TO BE SMARTER**
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Productive partnership

GLS has understood the pressures faced by school business managers nationwide for a long time. Recently, we've been asking ourselves, 'How can we get involved and truly add value to the SBM community?' This white paper is our opportunity to offer honest, tangible advice to help you to increase time and money saving opportunities within your school. It's also a chance for us to share the views of the wider, collaborative SBM network within a single, easy to digest document that will remain useful for years to come.



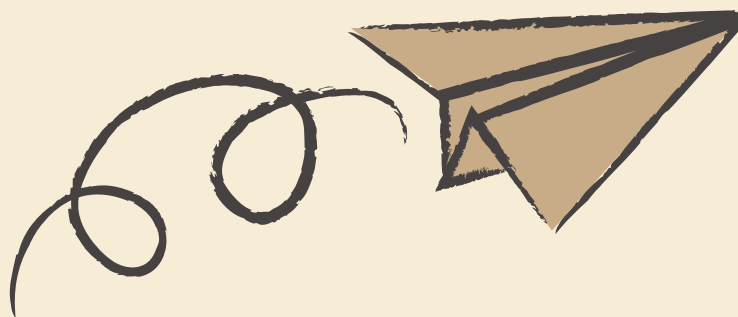
THE POWER OF WANDERLUST

In this month's 'A light-hearted view from the Engine Room' **WORKING SBM** shares the travel analogy she adopts when change is afoot – and offers five steps to help you approach that change with confidence

The free spirit in me loves to travel. I've learned over the years that, whether it be by car, boat, train, aeroplane, horseback, bicycle – or even walking – I'm happiest when I'm on the move. Between you and me, I'm the sort who enjoys going up and down in a lift! It doesn't really matter where I'm going – home or away – it's the forward momentum that

thrills me.

So, inevitably, alongside this is a love of change. New experiences, new people, new ways of working, new ideas – they all add to the variety of life as a school business leader, and I've always been determined not to stand still for too long. I could never understand the, 'I'll work here until I retire' mentality; I want to keep growing, learning, contributing until



someone says, 'Ok, it's time to stop now'. You won't be surprised to hear that, when that day comes, I plan to pack up a pannier and cycle around Europe!

I'm fortunate in that I currently work with like-minded colleagues and we've had some amazing experiences together due to our desire to embrace change, accept risk and work hard to be pioneers – as well as bring everyone with us if we can. It's not always easy, and not everyone has the same appetite or energy for the ride, but it's certainly fun!

AVOIDING ALICE'S RABBIT HOLE

The education landscape is changing so rapidly at the moment that the view from my engine room can feel like Alice's rabbit hole – the metaphorical unknown – and I sometimes wonder if I will ever get to the bottom! So, I like to remember my travel analogy when change is happening around me, and remind myself of these steps.

- 1 Why are you travelling?** Sometimes the answer to that question is easy. You're going to work, or on holiday, or nipping to the local shop for ketchup before your teenager goes into meltdown. Sometimes the answer is less obvious. Maybe the change will bring about more efficient processes, or improved outcomes for students. It is easy to be negative about the 'why' of travel, especially if you don't trust the reasons, but it is worth remembering that you can usually return home or go on to somewhere new if you don't like the destination.
- 2 Where are you are going?** I don't think anyone would embark on a journey without some idea of where they are going, at least on the first leg! So, if you are not the one with the change vision, or implementation responsibilities, ask to be informed. A big part of successful change management is to bring everyone with you; offer to help communicate the destination to your teams and focus on understanding where you are going.
- 3 How are you going to get there?** Obviously, if the plan is to walk miles, you'll need some decent boots. If you're flying you are likely

to need your passport. What is the change journey going to be like – long, short, bumpy? You need to know what will be required of you so that you can plan your time, prepare the resources and be ready for turbulence!

- 4 Have you booked accommodation?** In schools, change can often mean reallocation of classrooms or office space. We inevitably get attached to our own workspaces, so you may need to support colleagues through a move or get used to a different space yourself. The earlier you know about a move, the more prepared you will be, and the more time you will have available to clear out the accumulated paper!
- 5 What are you going to do when you get there?** A journey rarely involves arriving at a destination and then staying in one place. In the same way, a change process is never going to be the last change. Is it a step on the way? Will it build towards something bigger?

There are delays, diversions, heavy bags, language barriers and a child who needs a toilet...NOW!

SMOOTH THE PATH

Change, like travel, is never straightforward. There are delays, diversions, heavy bags, language barriers and a child who needs a toilet...NOW! But it is never dull, and the school business leader's skills and influence can smooth the path, solve problems as they appear and support others along the way.

So, the next time you meet a change initiative, approach it as you would your annual summer holiday – with excited anticipation for all you are about to contribute, learn and experience, and use your positivity to enthuse everyone around you. ■

WorkingSBM has worked as a SBM for over 14 years – 'supporting constant change and running the engine room!' An active member of the SBM community, you can find her on Twitter [@workingsbm2017](https://twitter.com/workingsbm2017) or you can read her excellent blog at <https://working-sbm.wordpress.com/>





A framework for effective PROCUREMENT

‘Effective procurement’ is the ability to obtain goods and services of the *right quality*, in the *right quantity*, delivered to the *right place*, at the *right time*, for the *right price*. Independent procurement consultant **NAOMI CLEWS**, of Naomi Clews Consultancy, explains the ‘five rights’ of procurement and provides strategies to stretch your budget further and enable you to work smarter with suppliers

The five interlinked ‘rights’ provide a framework for effective procurement. The failure of one right could impact on your ability to achieve the other four; for example, it may become necessary to compromise on

right quality or right price in order to receive the item at the right time. It is necessary to manage and mitigate the risks associated with any accepted compromise to ensure your procurement processes remain effective. Let’s take a more detailed look at each of the five rights of procurement.

RIGHT ONE: QUALITY

The right quality is achieved when a product or service is considered fit for purpose. It should meet the standards, features and performance set out in the specification. The price a school is willing to pay for

goods and services will impact on the right quality decision-making process.

GET IT RIGHT

By asking questions such as:

- What are we currently sourcing?
- Does it satisfy and meet our needs? If not, why not?



When choosing suppliers, scrutinise their accepted methods of order placement, minimum orders and lead times

autonomy to suppliers – aiding in the development of solutions that drive down total costs, whilst maintaining or improving services. If the school is innovative, a performance partnership can deliver the same services at lower cost, higher levels of service at the same cost, or – better still – higher service levels at lower costs.

By incentivising suppliers to provide a great service – rather than just ‘the service’ specified – you can leverage suppliers’ unique skills, capabilities and efficiency. Working closely with schools will reap rewards for suppliers, too – greater profitability, longer term contracts and loyal customers are amongst the many reported benefits.

This approach is superior to the conventional cost-plus or fixed-price transactional contract where the supplier has no incentive to do anything above and beyond providing ‘the service’.

RIGHT TWO: QUANTITY

The right quantity is achieved through accurate demand forecasts for products and services on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Whilst considering the historical demand, by analysing the demand highs and lows throughout the previous year, you can forecast the quantities required to meet and align with your previous demands. However, it is important to factor in any new developments

which may either increase or decrease demand, such as an increase or decrease in pupils.

GET IT RIGHT

- By segmenting products and services into categories such as strategic critical, strategic routine and non-critical – to create a sourcing strategy for each category.
- Knowing the who, what, why, when and where for product and service demand helps you to set minimum and maximum inventory levels. This supports stock rotation and ‘just in time’ deliveries (see right four – time) to avoid stock depreciation and obsolescence.

RIGHT THREE: PLACE

The right place combines the ability to identify the optimum delivery of the receipt and storage of goods and to find the best supplier to source the products and services from.

GET IT RIGHT

- By using a central store for the receipt and onward distribution of goods, thereby reducing the need for unnecessary movement and handling.
- When choosing suppliers, scrutinise their accepted methods of order placement, minimum orders and lead times.

RIGHT FOUR: TIME

The right time is closely linked to the right quantity. Just in time is an inventory control methodology, proven to reduce

suppliers’ response times. Kanban cards are used to signal a depletion of inventory which triggers stock replenishment. Consumption drives demand for more inventory and eliminates the ‘just in case’ ordering mentality which leads to waste.

GET IT RIGHT

- By using wholesalers or digital marketplaces to fulfil small, frequent orders at the expense of an annual delivery cost.
- Low-value, non-critical items, such as stationery, are candidates for consignment stock. The stationery company will manage the inventory levels and replenish the stock as required – invoicing the school only for the inventory consumed.

RIGHT FIVE: PRICE

The right price refers to costs. For example, the cost of acquisition, whole life costs and the ‘opportunity cost’ – meaning other alternatives are lost at the expense of one being chosen.

GET IT RIGHT

- By incentivising suppliers to deliver solutions and not just activities. This can result in higher service levels at the same, or lower, cost.
- Furthermore, the use of gain share agreements – and working collaboratively to share the risk and rewards by pooling resources – is an excellent way of motivating suppliers to innovate and take the cost out of services.

In summary, get the five rights of procurement right by analysing your supply chain and working more closely with your suppliers to help make your budget stretch further. ■

- Does our supplier’s current performance measure up to our stakeholders’ (parents, pupils, governors) expectations?
- If stakeholders are unsatisfied, can we reduce costs or increase quality?

By driving a process of continuous improvement, in partnership with suppliers, you can mitigate the costs associated with quality improvements. If you can encourage suppliers to develop innovative, cost-effective methods of performance and quality, your suppliers could solve your quality problems for you.

An output-based specification provides

SECURE FOR SUMMER

School's (nearly) out for summer! With less footfall during summer holiday it's important to know the school premises are secure. We asked the experts what you need to be mindful of to keep your school safe at all times



Protecting your school against threats is, of course, a priority all-year-round. However, during school holidays, a combination of less populated buildings and the wealth of – often very expensive – high-tech equipment housed inside means the threat of incidents could be heightened. “Any quiet or

unattended premises is, potentially, a more likely target for thieves and vandals,” says Dave Mundy, managing director of Delta Security. “With the increased smart technology kept on-site for learning purposes, schools become a prime target for break-ins and vandalism during the holidays,” adds Jamie Allam, commercial director at Amthal Fire & Security.

“An effective security procedure can help limit the chances of these incidents happening.

“Creating a safe and secure school environment requires significant planning, and key features need to be designed into the overall security architecture – right from the perimeter systems through to internal classroom security features,” continues Jamie. “There is no benefit to installing an impressive security fence and gates at the front of the school if it is possible for intruders to access the grounds via an unprotected entry point elsewhere on the site! The physical security that surrounds a school site needs to complement school building security – not only in terms of intruder alarm systems, but also interfaced with intelligent access control solutions across the entire campus – incorporating CCTV smart technologies where required.”

It is also important to continually assess your school's security needs – as these may change over time – and make the appropriate upgrades. This was highlighted by a Jacksons Fencing study. “We conducted extensive research into school security and found that, during school perimeter refurbishments, 71% of architects are told to simply repeat the existing specification – rather than adjusting to meet changing needs and risks. A percentage of teachers report issues with the school perimeter and gates – from being climbed over (28%) and causing injury, to gates not locking properly (10%),” explains Peter Jackson, managing director, Jacksons Fencing.

OPENING TO THE PUBLIC

“The situation can become more complex as more and more schools rent out sports and drama facilities to the wider public,” says Dave. Indeed, hiring out the school's facilities for weekends, evenings and school holidays is increasingly popular as a means to generating additional income, so what should you be mindful of if you're opening your school to the public?

According to Dave, this no longer has to pose the security risks it did in the past. “In general, we no longer see schools that would be locked on their perimeter or main entrance, where access was relatively lax between

The potential risks associated with the wider public using a school's facilities outside of school hours have been mitigated by the use of pre-programmed ID cards

the different classrooms and offices. Furthermore, the more traditional pin locks – which necessitated sharing codes – are becoming a thing of the past.

“Today, by and large, schools use modern access control systems, where users are granted access by using their personalised ID cards. ID cards are programmed to provide access to specific areas according to the person's authorisation – and the cloud-based systems mean that school personnel can view when certain areas have been accessed, and by who. Access can also be remotely updated for each ID should there be an issue with a user's activity.

“The potential risks associated with the wider public using a school's facilities outside of school hours have also been mitigated by the use of pre-programmed ID cards. Unauthorised access will trigger alarms, and modern, HD, IP-based CCTV cameras are now able to give very reliable footage – even at night – providing both evidence and a deterrent to would-be criminals.”

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SECURITY SUPPLIERS

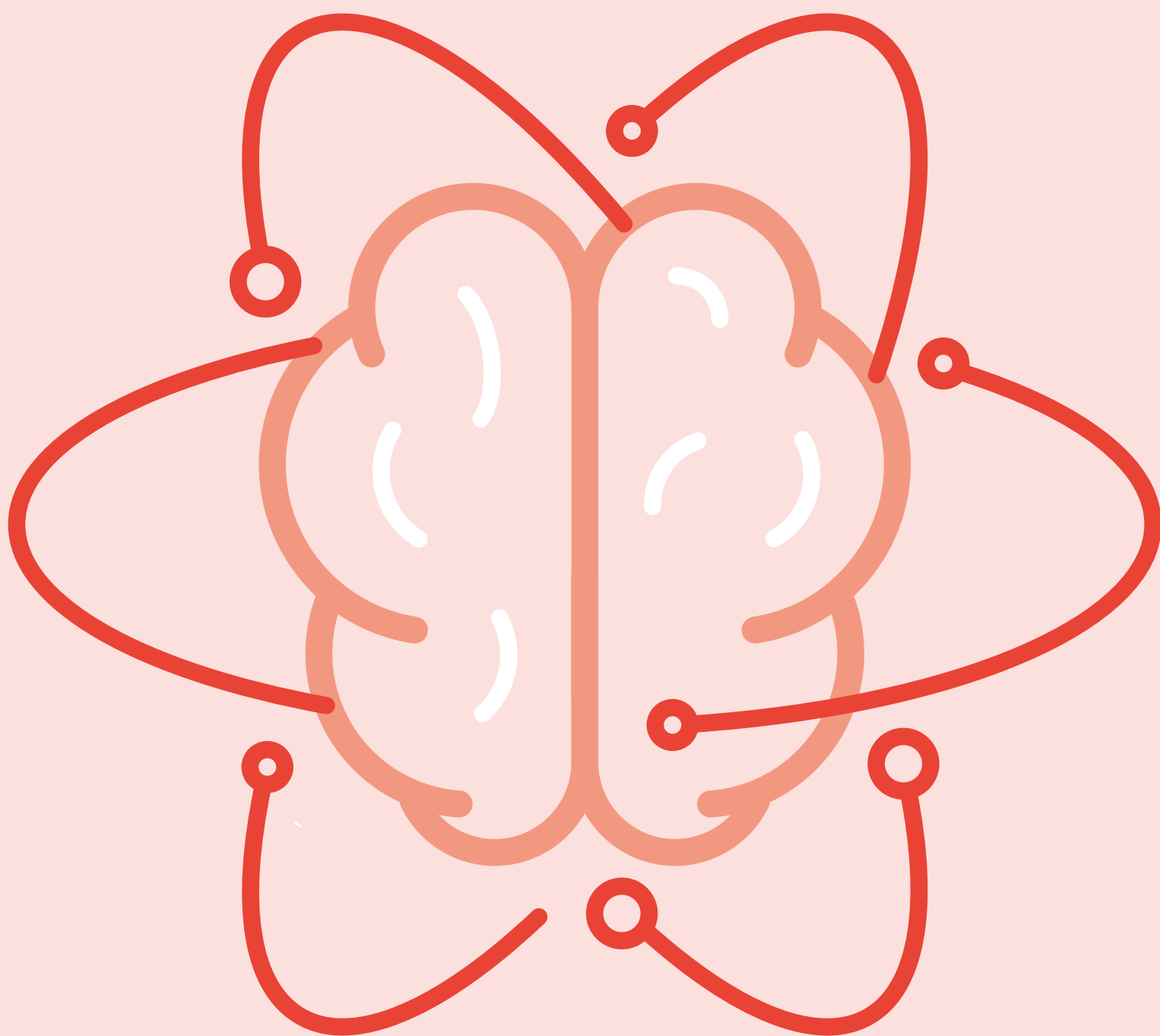
“Providing adequate security is an unavoidable issue for any school so it's important for school decision-makers to seek guidance from reliable security solutions providers. In order to create a safe and welcoming environment it's important that schools work with security providers who have a good knowledge of security standards from third-party bodies,” says Peter. Jamie also suggests approaching suppliers that have the necessary accreditation, as well as “extensive experience in working in educational facilities, alongside a clear understanding of the need for sensitivity and confidentiality”.

“Criminal checks – namely that all engineers are DBS checked – is important for schools in providing reassurance and convenience,” adds Dave. “What we find, by and large, is that schools are looking for reputable security providers that have expertise in the sector. Especially in smaller schools, where there may not be a security expert on-site, it's important to demonstrate examples of projects that work and – also critical – can be achieved to the necessary standards within public sector budgets.” ■

Secure your school

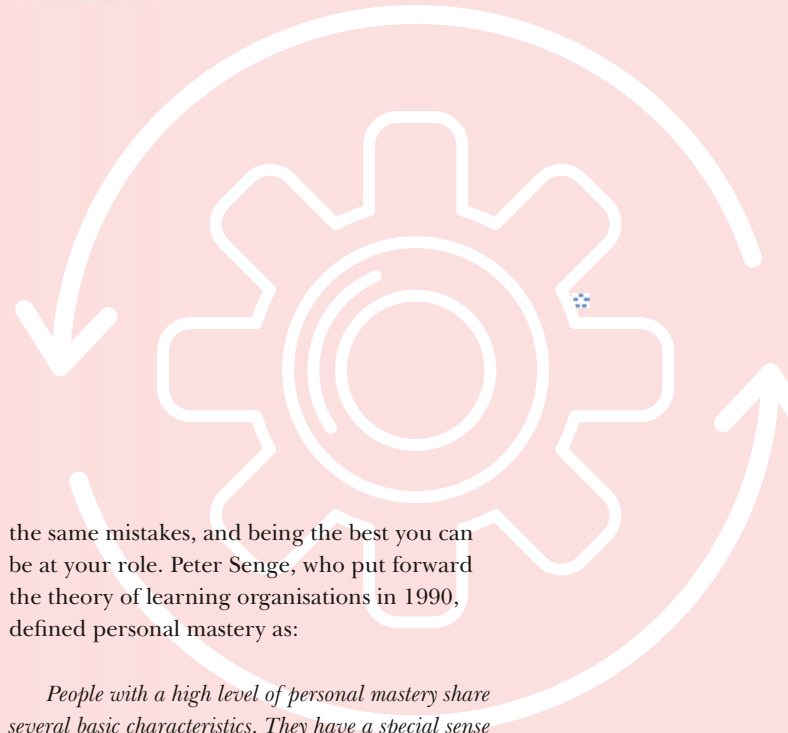
All buildings should have an effective security procedure in place, says Jamie Allam, commercial director at Amthal Fire & Security – and this doesn't always have to mean costly pieces of kit or upgrades. Here are some top tips from Jamie to secure your school this summer.

- Go right back to basics – making sure all windows, doors and shutters are closed and locked should be the final check, before securing and alarming the building for the holidays.
- If the building will be closed for the whole of the holiday period then it is essential security systems, such as alarms and security lights, are maintained to be in operational working order.
- Fences and gates should be checked regularly to prevent unauthorised access to the site. If a site has lockable gates these should be locked for the duration of the holidays.
- Ensure contact details for key holders are up-to-date; these are, often, the first point of contact if an incident occurs. Out-of-date contact details can result in unnecessary response delays and extra costs.



Personal mastery

In the second instalment of a new series of articles – *Driving School Improvement* – **STEPHEN MITCHELL**, chief operating officer at the Spencer Academies Trust in Nottingham, looks at personal mastery – the first aspect of the ‘learning organisation model’ – and why you should never stop learning



There's a famous saying that to become an expert in anything takes 10,000 hours of practice. Ten thousand hours! That's 5.5 years of being a SBL – if you work

37.5 hours a week, 48 weeks per year. Wow.

Fortunately, we don't need to let statistics like that scare us off. None of us are complete newbies to the SBL world – we've all got a lifetime of experience that we can bring to bear on our roles, and all of that experience is hugely valuable in making you the person that you are today. We also have a great community of like-minded peers reading this magazine – and wider afield – to call friends, who readily give their time and expertise to assist others. We are very fortunate as a profession. And yet, as a profession, we need to do more. We need to get better.

I wrote last month about the learning organisation (LO) model and how, by adopting this, we can improve our schools. This article talks about personal mastery – the first of the five building blocks within the LO model.

EDUCATION IS EVOLVING

In many ways, schools can be seen as not very dynamic places. Perception – particularly by people outside of the sector and those who don't see what goes on in our schools, day-in, day-out – could be forgiven for thinking that education doesn't really change – it's rows of children sitting down, being taught the wisdom of the world.

We know this isn't the case – and thank goodness that education isn't the same today as the system that I grew up with! The system is evolving and improving and it needs to continue to do so – and so do we.

Personal mastery isn't about clocking up the hours – it's about developing a mechanism whereby you're always learning, not repeating

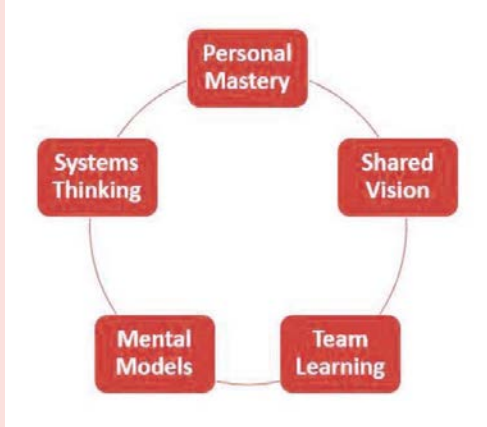
the same mistakes, and being the best you can be at your role. Peter Senge, who put forward the theory of learning organisations in 1990, defined personal mastery as:

People with a high level of personal mastery share several basic characteristics. They have a special sense of purpose that lies behind their visions and goals. For such a person, a vision is a calling rather than simply a good idea. They see current reality as an ally, not an enemy. They have learned how to perceive and work with forces of change rather than resist those forces. They are deeply inquisitive, committed to continually seeing reality more and more accurately. They feel connected to others and to life itself. Yet they sacrifice none of their uniqueness. They feel as if they are part of a larger creative process, which they can influence but cannot unilaterally control.

People with a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode. They never 'arrive'. Sometimes, language, such as the term 'personal mastery', creates a misleading sense of definiteness, of black and white. But personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident. Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see that 'the journey is the reward'.

These are massive paragraphs, full of nuance and wisdom. I'm struck by the difference between the common understanding of mastery as being 'expert', and how Senge sees it as recognising it as a never-ending journey, one where we're continually questioning and learning. I know I, all too often, assume I have the answers, rather than questioning and trying to find a better way. ►

If you're not learning new things, you're not developing



CREATIVE TENSION

Senge goes on to discuss personal mastery as being a key ally to having the right people on board with you. Imagine an elastic band, stretched between your vision and your reality. The tension can only be released in one of two ways – towards the vision, or towards the reality. Having people on your team that understand this, and hold true to the vision, is absolutely crucial if we are to be successful. This tension, between vision and reality, is called the ‘creative tension’; those who have personal mastery can master this creative tension.

A really great part of the personal mastery element is that of how we view failure. I know many people who view themselves as failing because they’re not achieving everything on their to-do lists. They are the furthest possible thing from failing; they are a huge success and I love them dearly for the personality they bring to the office, the sheer amounts of success they do achieve, how they add immeasurably to the organisation – and I’m in awe of them. However, if we ascribe traditional failure as being ‘not getting the desired outcome’, then it was Edison who said he didn’t fail – he just found 10,000 ways that don’t work.

Failure is simply a gap between the vision and the current reality. Nothing about the reality is final or fixed – we can move forward from there, learning as we go.

It’s about developing a mechanism whereby you’re always learning, not repeating the same mistakes, and being the best you can be at your role

TRACKING PROGRESS

CPD is a hugely useful, almost pre-requisite for ensuring you can achieve personal mastery. If you don’t put fuel in your car, you’re not going anywhere – and it’s the same with your development. If you’re not learning new things, you’re not developing.

This doesn’t mean expensive training courses all the time – some of the best CPD is by recognising what is happening around you and having conversations about that. Similarly, reading *EdExec* can unearth some hidden gems and real nuggets of advice. I know that I’ve come across a few cracking ideas as I’ve read articles which I’ve then gone on to use in my day job.

If you’re a member of the ISBL (and if you’re not, you really should consider it), they have a CPD log on their website. It’s a great way to record what CPD you’re getting and provides an opportunity to reflect on it. One of my recurrent New Year’s resolutions is to do more self-reflection and journaling. On the rare occasions that I have done this I have found it to be so useful to clarify my thoughts and to allow me to monitor and track progress, as well as providing a platform for self-accountability. I know others find solace in writing blogs, and now wouldn’t give this up for all

the proverbial tea in China.

Whatever works for you, I would encourage you to achieve personal mastery – it’s the building block from this time forward. ■

Driving School Improvement

The learning organisation model

Following his Really Important Bits series, which explored lessons from a MBA, Stephen’s latest series looks at the five traits of the ‘learning organisation model’ and how these can be applied to drive improvement in your school. The concepts in both series are explored in more detail at www.stephenmitchell.info and are available for you to freely download and use.

“YOU KNOW YOU’RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE AND THAT’S REALLY IMPORTANT.”

Barbara Daykin, CEO

Endeavour Academy Trust, Bristol

Barbara Daykin is a former headteacher and now CEO to four schools within the Endeavour Academy Trust. We spoke to her about her experiences in school improvement.

It starts with a strategy

“As a Trust we’re immersed in quite a number of different aspects of Teach First’s strategic work and I feel that’s all to our benefit.”

Support is key

“It’s important to build your support network and don’t be afraid to ask for help. It comes from Teach First, it comes from the universities and it comes from the school, so you know there’s a really good structure of support there.”

It’s not easy

“What you’re doing is building capacity in your own school. Given the difficulty in recruiting good teachers, the chance to train them for yourself, along with other professional partners, is really valuable.”

Change starts here. Visit our website to find out more about becoming a partner: www.teachfirst.org.uk/readmore

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EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

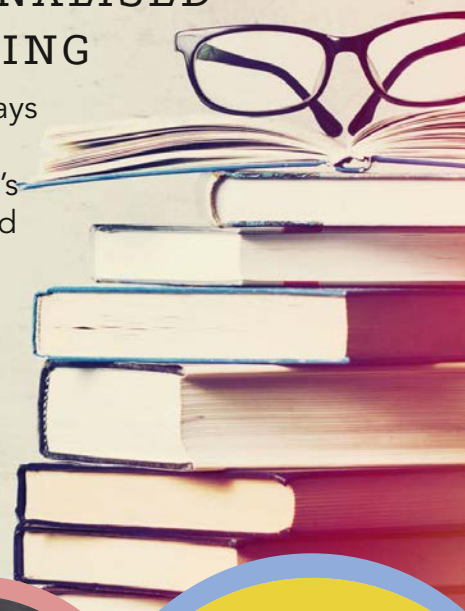
Coming up in our
September issue:

OUT IN SEPTEMBER

Read previous issues online
at edexec.co.uk

RESOURCING PERSONALISED LEARNING

The best ways
to resource
your school's
personalised
learning
ambitions



TECHNOLOGY AND RURAL SCHOOLS

We find out how
Stewartstown Primary
has embraced its
rural environment



START OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT

Use the start of the
new academic year
to get your finances
in order



MEET YOUR MENTOR

Why getting a mentor
could be the best thing
you do for your career



DRIVING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Stephen Mitchell
continues his series
looking at the 'learning
organisation model'

EVERY MONTH

Inspiring articles
Sector news
Management advice
Edtech updates
Tea break treats

60 SECONDS WITH...

A glimpse into
the life of our
SBL of the
month

THE BIG ASK

We ask the big
questions...
you share your
answers

ICT MATTERS

The latest
developments
in school
technology

TECHNO GEEK

The month's
edtech guru
shares their
insights

ICT MATTERS

THE LATEST UPDATES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY

SHARE ME
WITH YOUR
IT MANAGER

THE ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL

Elements Primary School has taken a simple –
but effective – approach to technology

EDTECH ON A BUDGET

Seven strategies to save money on your
school's edtech procurement

TECHNO GEEK

Our tech guru this month explores how best
to take advantage of new technologies



PUTTING TECHNOLOGY AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION

Fujitsu's Education Ambassador Programme gives education establishments the opportunity to discover digital technologies, contribute to their evolution and learn how they can empower young people to create, invent and build their futures

Fujitsu recently opened its latest Innovation Hubs in Scotland, at the University of West Scotland, the Dundee and Angus College and North East Scotland College.

Part of Fujitsu's Education Ambassador Programme – designed to support greater collaboration between industry and education, aiding career skills development and providing expertise on personalised technology in teaching and learning – the hubs are designed to operate as centres of excellence within the education community. Launched in 2015, the national engagement initiative is led by global IT leaders Fujitsu, NetApp, Ruckus Networks, Intel and PFU EMEA Limited to highlight how computing power underpins knowledge in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects. Numerous educational institutions across the UK have now been recognised as ambassadors; they are selected based on their recognition of technology as an enabler to support and enhance the learning experience and to develop digital skills for students and teachers.

As with all of the Innovation Hubs, the latest higher education establishments will be equipped

with the latest computing technology, providing staff and students with the best innovations to enhance learning and teaching – and, ultimately, help students gain the skills they'll need to achieve more in the digital workplace.

BRINGING THE VISION TO LIFE

"It is a pleasure to see the passion and engagement within the latest hubs, and particularly towards digital transformation and the role of digital in supporting its students," says Andrew Cowling, channel marketing and business development at PFU EMEA Limited. "We are delighted to support this initiative with our scanning solutions and help extol the virtues that moving from paper-based processes to digital ones can bring when immersed within the learning experience, the part it has to play in capturing evidence of progress, as well as in improving administrative functions and increasing productivity.

A recent survey by Fujitsu revealed that around a fifth (22%) of consumers believe that digital education should be part of the modern education curriculum, which points towards a real need to see education establishments focusing on the digital journey.

Institutions such as the latest hubs will play a crucial role in making this happen – and Fujitsu, supported by their partners, is committed to supporting them in bringing their vision to life.

TECHNOLOGICALLY-SKILLED POPULATION

The hubs provide cutting-edge equipment and practical industry expertise – serving as an example of how collaboration can help develop a technologically-skilled population. They have been designed to give students an insight into, not just how to use technology, but how they can apply it to everyday life.

The scanners integrated as part of the hub are the wireless-enabled ScanSnap iX1500 with a touchscreen, and the overhead ScanSnap SV600 that can cope with a wide variety of everyday material and items. These units

are already an integral part of education and multiple businesses in enabling users to embrace the benefits of going digital.

More information can be found at

www.ScanSnapit.com.

As Fujitsu understands, access to technology only has the potential to develop those that understand how to use it. For this reason, as part of the programme, Fujitsu offers a course for staff to ensure they are best equipped to develop students' skills in six key technologies – identified as having the biggest impact on the jobs of tomorrow:

- internet of things;
- virtual reality/augmented reality;
- cybersecurity;
- data analytics and big data;
- programming/coding/robotics; and
- artificial intelligence (AI) cognitive computing.

Please visit digital-excellence.co.uk for further information. ■



ScanSnap iX1500

- Scan everyday documents such as forms & permission slips up to A4 & even A3
- Scan colour, double sided & mixed batches of documents
- Simple in its operation, connection via USB to PC or Mac
- Intuitive & automated scanning & seamless distribution to a host of destinations such as email
- Bundled with OCR software for creation of searchable & editable files



ScanSnap SV600

- Overhead contactless scanning of loose documents up to A3, bound material & pupil produced material such as craft items
- Simple one button approach, compatible with both PC & Mac
- Continuous scanning possible with page turning detection & timed scanning
- Automated image enhancement
- Bundled with OCR software for creation of searchable & editable files

Want to learn more?

For further information on the Fujitsu Ambassador Programme visit www.educationambassador.co.uk. The site has informative videos providing an insight into the company's vision. Please also visit www.emea.fujitsu.com/scanners-in-education for white papers, case studies and material around the use of scanning solutions within education.

FUJITSU CoDE

The online CPD course, available free of charge to all teachers

digital-excellence.co.uk



THE ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL

Having opened in September 2018, Elements Primary School, in Middleton, Leeds, has taken a simple approach to edtech – avoiding ‘technology for technology’s sake’, while still maximising children’s learning journeys. CARLY WOOD speaks to executive principal SARAH HORSBROUGH to find out more

Part of the Wellspring Academy Trust, Elements Primary School opened in September 2018 to meet demand for primary school places in the Middleton area of Leeds.

With just 27 pupils in reception currently, the school will grow with the children – adding a reception intake every year until 2024, when it will be full; another 45 children are due to join the school this September.

“It’s a very exciting project to be part of,” says Sarah Horsbrough, executive principal. “We’ve got 27 pupils at the moment, who we

were thrilled to get – when the application window was open for this year group there was nothing on the site; it was just a field really. We were still going through the process of our school opening, so they took a chance on us.”

Sarah, who has taught in primary education for more than 20 years – and worked in schools as a member of the support staff prior to that – says the opportunity to head up a new school was one she couldn’t pass up. “It’s a fantastic opportunity – I felt this was a once-in-a-career kind of opportunity to start a school from scratch; it’s been amazing.”

DEVICE-AGNOSTIC

As a blank canvas, Sarah was able to equip the school with the technologies and tools she saw fit – for both the actual management of the school and the curriculum. This meant adopting many of today’s wants and needs in terms of edtech, such as full GDPR compliance, a cloud-based approach and paperless working. “Due to the unique position we’re in – as a new school – some things have been easier as we haven’t had to transition from anything. Once we’d made the decision to be paperless and cloud-based, it was pretty straightforward to set up,” Sarah explains.

Everything is operating on one platform, all from the same provider – Google – which, Sarah says, has streamlined the school’s operation. “In terms of collaborative working between staff, it’s all very joined-up and enables easy sharing of documents and resources. We don’t have to email anything or print anything – it leads to a very efficient way of working and this is what allows us to be as paperless as we can be.

“In terms of the file system and structure, it looks pretty standard but, because we’re not server-based, there’s a difference in the security of it all – the ease of access; there’s no need for flash pens, hard drives, or a server that needs replacing every few years – and, because the system is device-agnostic, it doesn’t matter where I am; if I can get online I can get to whatever I need.”

PARENT ACCESS

The benefits extend to parents, too. “We were able to say to parents, right from the beginning, ‘This is our school and this is how it’s going to work’ – so they were aware of everything,” Sarah continues. “All of our parents – even those who don’t have computers or more expensive technology and hardware at home – have got a phone, so everything we need them to access they can usually get via their phone. We do provide a device for parents in school, so if anyone does have issues getting online, or being able to do anything, then they can come into school and use that.”

Their system has enabled seamless parental appointments at parents’ evenings, removing a particular organisational headache. “Traditionally – and especially within large schools – the logistics of getting everybody together in school, and scheduling those appointments so that you don’t have any clashes, is really tricky. Some parents, inevitably, will say, ‘I wanted a later – or earlier – appointment’, or they won’t be able to easily co-ordinate appointments between siblings.

“We release our appointments at a set time

– so we will inform parents that all appointments will be released on this date, at this time – a bit like tickets going on sale. This puts the onus on them to be ready to log-on and choose the slots they want.” Does it work? Sarah says the proof is in the pudding – the school had 100% attendance at its most recent parents’ evening.

“From a school point of view, we wait until the window closes and then we collate timetables, so we know who is coming and when. We haven’t really had to do anything in school to facilitate this, other than having the system set up. It’s all very streamlined,” she continues.

The systems are all very user-friendly, Sarah explains, with instructions and user guides. The approach also means that parents can update their contact details by simply logging in and making the changes. “They don’t have to remember to ring, or come into the school. It means that our systems are as up-to-date as they can be, which is helpful in terms of communication with parents and emergency contacts. It does streamline everything, and parents have been very positive about it – they, too, avoid endless paperwork being thrown at them,” she adds.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

The simple, but effective, approach Sarah has adopted extends to the use of technology in the classroom, too. Having had some devices and technologies in mind for the set-up initially – through research, visits to other primary schools to see their technology in action, knowledge-sharing on social media, attendance at The Bett Show and discussions with Steven Hope, head of independent learning at Leeds City College – Sarah started to ask ‘Why?’.

“The whole approach has been around ‘Why?’ We asked ourselves why would we use that, why do we actually need this and why would that be the best tool? We looked at the integrated tools already built into our platform and realised that, actually, we didn’t need the level of technology and expense that I’d initially had in mind – everything we wanted to do we could achieve with a touchscreen TV – a very big one! – and a high-quality visualiser.”

So, each classroom is equipped with a visualiser and touchscreen TV, and every ►

Albeit we’re a technology-led school, I think people would be surprised that the actual kit we’ve got in school is quite minimal

child has their own device. Along with digital cameras, the school also has some VR headsets – “We do think these give the children a unique experience,” Sarah says. Other than that, the technology is very minimal. “Albeit we’re a technology-led school, I think people would be surprised that the actual kit we’ve got in school is quite minimal really, because it’s about having the tools to do all the open-ended learning, activities and teaching.”

While kitting out the school, Sarah became very mindful of ‘technology for technology’s sake’. “Some gadgets and some tools – even with software, sometimes, not just hardware – can be very narrow, and you’ve got to fit in with what they do; whereas, actually, we want our children’s learning to be very open-ended and we want them to learn to use these tools as vehicles to their learning, rather than them being the learning itself.

“The hardware/software is secondary to the learning because of the way resources have developed. This is what keeps the learning experience open, and very much led by the children and the staff, rather than the technology leading them.”

TRAINING AND SAFETY

As well as being accessible to the children, the simplicity of the technology has also removed the need for extensive teacher training; both staff and students are able to get the most out of the technology quickly, without over-complicating things.

“In the same way that our solutions streamline the operational side of the school – making it


very efficient – they do the same thing for the children’s learning. Children come to us with quite a high skillset already – even in reception – they’re not scared of technology. We’re getting these children ready for jobs that don’t exist yet, so they have to have an avenue to go down that allows them to be creative and reflective, always exploring – if we give them too many gadgets, and fixed pieces of software and fixed devices, we’re not going to get that,” Sarah says.

As for e-safety, Elements places great importance on ensuring children understand the implications of today’s technology. In addition to the likes of Childline, and the police visiting the school to speak to pupils about e-safety, Sarah explains that this is also embedded in the curriculum. “E-safety is absolutely part of our curriculum plan; children get a regular input on that, over and above it being just in their normal, day-to-day learning.”

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

While the school is still growing there will be additions to make in terms of edtech, and there is a five-year budget plan to support the delivery of ICT. In any future purchases, Sarah says she will be mindful of the same ‘whys’ that she has been asking thus far, in order to secure the most appropriate technology for the school’s needs.




She advises schools to take the same approach – in terms of streamlining their hardware. “The ability to meet virtually, share information and share documentation just makes things move at a better pace, with fewer hiccups,” she says, thinking about her chosen tech from a school management point of view. ■

An illustration at the bottom of the page features two tall, dark blue server racks with glowing yellow and red lights, standing on a bed of white, fluffy clouds. To the right of the server racks, a laptop computer is open, displaying a webpage with text and a yellow button. The laptop also sits on the clouds. The background is a solid dark red color.

We want our
children’s
learning to be
very open-ended

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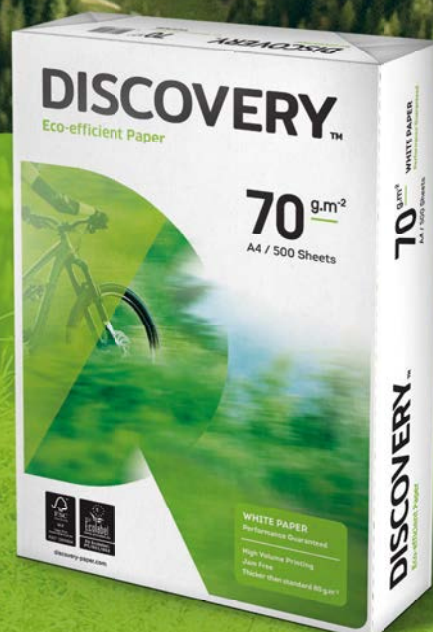
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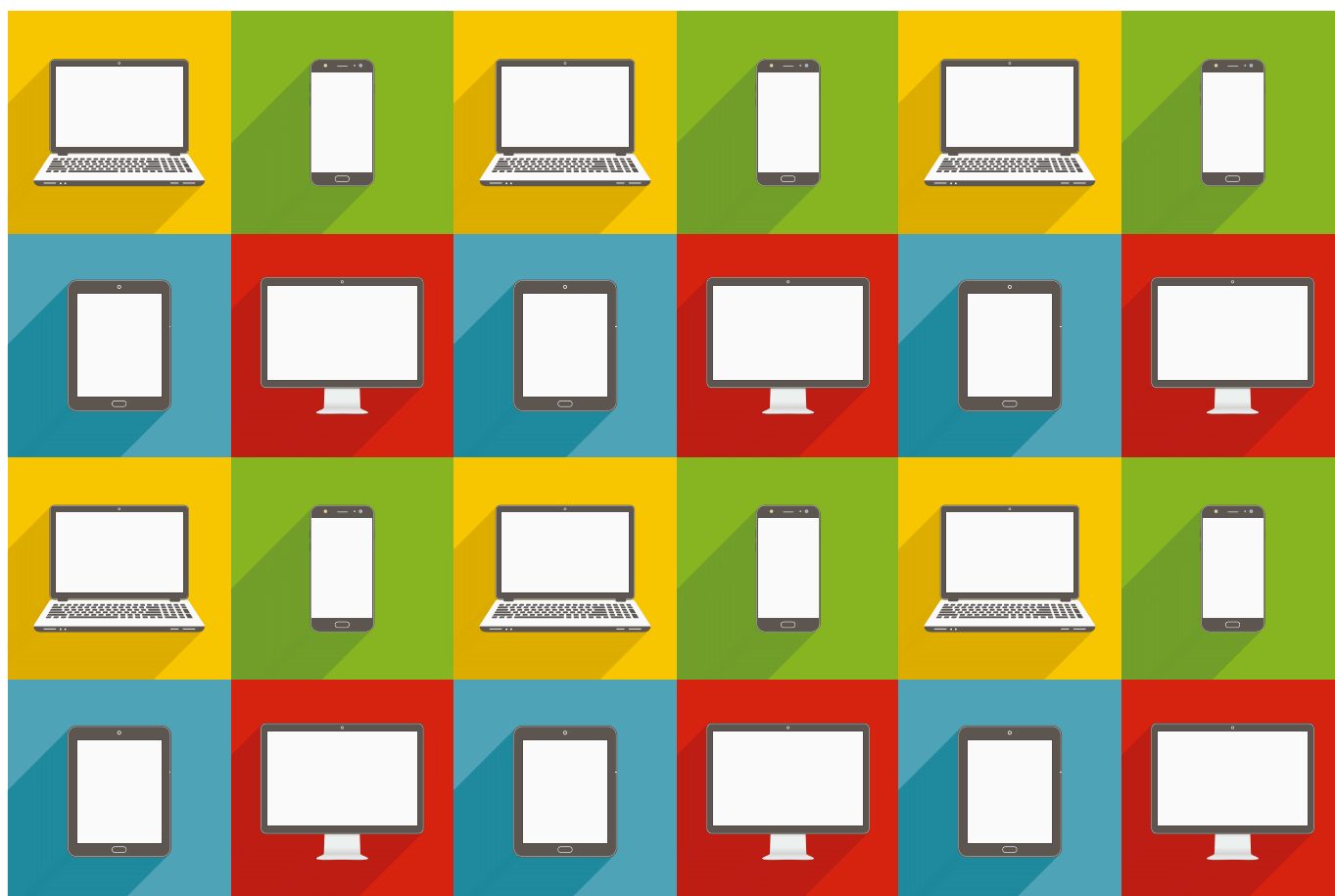
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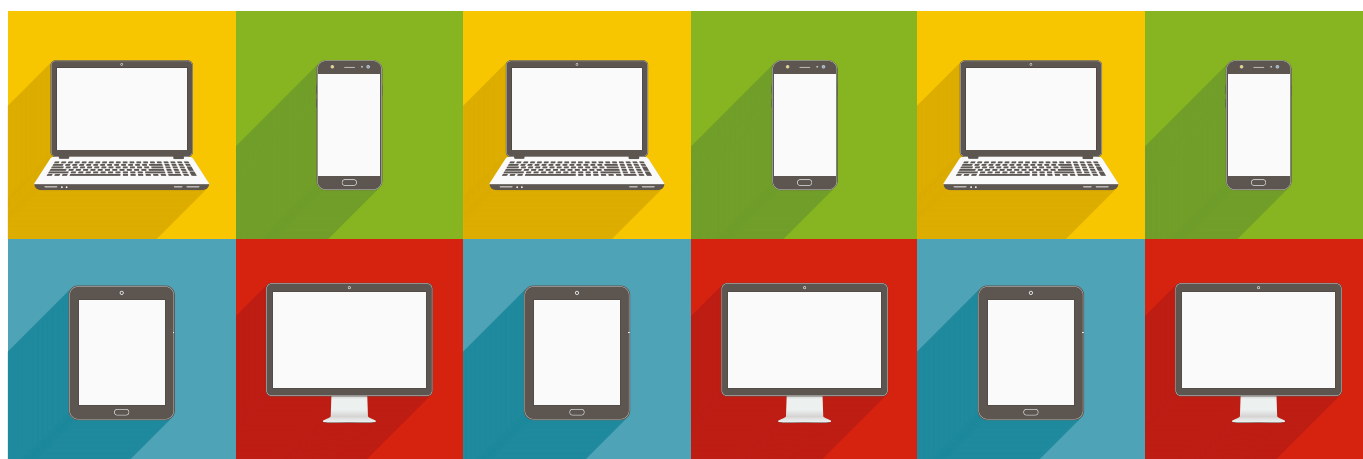
NONSTOP
SUSTAINABILITY





Edtech on a budget

Securing new education technology for your school comes at an – often hefty – price. From refurbished equipment to monthly subscription services to reward programmes, initiatives exist to keep costs down while still seeing your school benefit from the latest gadgets. *EdExec* rounds up some ways to make your edtech spend go further



In the all-too-familiar world of rising costs and shrinking budgets, here are seven strategies to save money on your school's edtech procurement.

1. BYOD

By implementing a bring your own device (BYOD) policy in your school, you can save on the obvious cost of the devices – thereby freeing up that budget allocation to other areas. Another benefit of BYOD is that children will be familiar with how to use the technology – improving participation levels.

However, there are considerations to take into account with this approach – including the need to establish clear policies, monitoring what children are accessing and preventing a divide between low- and high-income families.

2. CONSIDER LEASING

By leasing equipment – rather than purchasing it outright – schools can avoid a hefty lump-sum payment. Leasing also provides a way to keep on top of the latest technology for your school, through shorter-term commitments – often, schools can buy the technology at the end of the agreed term, or return it and move onto the next innovation.

Leasing offers a viable option if you're looking to spread out payments; however, if you can afford the upfront cost, it's worth comparing the lump-sum spend against the cost of leasing over the length of the agreement, in order to get an idea of what makes more financial sense.

3. GROUP TOGETHER

Buying in bulk has the power the secure discounts – often, the more of something you want to buy, the lower the cost per unit. So, consider collaborating with other schools in your local area to maximise the saving potential of purchasing in bulk – the promise of a large, multi-school order is sure to attract the attention of suppliers.

Use your network of fellow SBMs – via your contacts on social media or through your local SBM group – to find out if any nearby schools intend to procure any similar products or services to your school in the near future, and collaborate with them to achieve better deals. Collectively purchasing edtech – or any product or service for your school, for that matter – can achieve cost-savings not to be sniffed at.

4. REFURBISHED EQUIPMENT

Another way to slash the cost of edtech is to buy reconditioned equipment – you may well end up with a better spec this way, too, as your budget can stretch further than when buying new.

If you have any reservations about buying reconditioned technology, make sure you know what you're getting. High-quality refurbished items – from trusted suppliers – will have been fully tested and often come with after-sales support and warranty periods.

Consider collaborating with other schools in your local area to maximise the saving potential when purchasing in bulk

5. REWARD SCHEMES

Be on the lookout for any reward programmes or trade-in schemes offered by businesses. Much like loyalty cards, or trading in your existing phone for the next model when your contract is due for renewal, there are schemes in edtech purchasing that exist to reward loyal customers. When it comes to, what can often be, expensive pieces of kit, the promise of some money off in exchange for your repeat custom can make all the difference, so find out if your edtech supplier offers any incentives.

6. SECOND-HAND SAVINGS

As the saying goes, 'One man's trash is another man's treasure'. Explore your options when it comes to swapping and loaning among schools, as something that one school may deem no longer suitable, another could snap up for a fraction of the original

purchase price and put to great use in their school. Again, network and utilise your pool of contacts to see what surplus equipment might be out there.

7. TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Due to the costly nature of edtech, being able to try before you buy can give you peace of mind that your money is going to be spent wisely.

Suppliers often offer the opportunity of coming into your school and talking you through their product using a demonstration. Many also provide an extended trial period – sometimes in return for some feedback. These trial periods give you the chance to test any hardware or software among staff and/or students, ensuring that it performs as you had hoped or expected.

Take advantage of trial periods and make sure the equipment is exactly what you want before committing to the purchase. ■

DfE Deals for Schools

You should also check out the Department for Education's Deals for Schools to see if they can supply what you need. Their Schools Commercial Team reviews a wide range of deals, which are assessed for compliance with procurement regulations, ease of use, suitability and value for money. Visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/deals-for-schools/deals-for-schools to see their deals on ICT.

LIVE IT

Time to take a few moments out for some light and interesting reading – a well-earned break from numbers and statistics!



Charges for driving on the ‘world’s most crooked street’

The thousands of tourists who drive down San Francisco’s famous crooked street each year could soon have to pay for the privilege, says *Sky News*.

Local residents have long complained that Lombard Street feels more like an overcrowded amusement park than a neighbourhood thoroughfare; during the summer an estimated 6,000 people a day visit the 600-foot-long street.

Now, city officials have announced a bill that would give San Francisco the authority to establish a toll and reservation system – which could be up to \$10 – in an effort to reduce crowds and traffic congestion. “We must implement a system that enables both residents and visitors to enjoy the ‘crookedest street in the world,’” said assemblyman Phil Ting, who drafted the proposed legislation.

Leeds becomes first UK city to lower childhood obesity rate

Leeds has become the first city in the UK to report a drop in childhood obesity, after introducing a programme to help parents set boundaries for their children and say ‘No’ to sweets and junk food, according to *The Guardian*.

Only a few cities in the world, notably Amsterdam, have managed to cut child obesity. Like Amsterdam, the decline in Leeds is most marked among families living in the most deprived areas, where the problem is worst and hardest to tackle.

“The improvement in the most deprived children in Leeds is startling,” said Susan Jebb,

a professor of diet and population health at Oxford University, whose team has analysed the city’s data. Over four years, obesity has dropped from 11.5% to 10.5% and the trajectory is steadily downwards. Among the more affluent families, there was also a decline from 6.8% to 6%; overall, the drop was from 9.4% to 8.8%.

No such data has been reported elsewhere in the UK, where childhood obesity is a major concern – 28% of all children aged two-to-15 in England are overweight or obese.

Giraffes considered for ‘endangered’ status

The US Fish & Wildlife Service has taken a major step toward protecting giraffes under the Endangered Species Act, saying their protection by the law may be warranted after conservation groups petitioned for their inclusion.

As reported by *The Washington Post*, giraffes, which inhabit numerous countries across Africa, have seen their population steadily decrease and are considered ‘vulnerable’ by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Just over 97,000 giraffes remained in the wild in 2016, and their population has suffered a decline of 36% to 40% since 1985, the IUCN estimates.

“The service finds that the petition to list the giraffe presented substantial information on potential threats associated with development, agriculture and mining,” the US Fish & Wildlife Service said in a release.

Treat yourself

UNDERBELLY FESTIVAL IN SOUTH BANK, LONDON

5 April-29 September 2019

Enjoy a festival of live entertainment and alfresco eating and drinking. Stretching throughout the summer, the festival returns for its 11th year with circus, theatre, cabaret, comedy, music and children's shows on the south bank of the Thames. You can also visit the free-to-enter festival site to tuck into street food from the riverside vendors and grab a drink at one of London's biggest outdoor bars, including the Rekorderlig Botanicals Bar and Pimm's Hut.

DON'T
MISS



VISIT
THIS

INTERNATIONAL BEATLEWEEK, LIVERPOOL

21-27 August 2019

Cavern City Tours presents the annual International Beatleweek Festival, which celebrates the music of the Beatles in the city where it all began – Liverpool. This international event gathers 70 bands from more than 20 countries, and fans from more than 40. Festival highlights include theatre shows, outdoor venues, late night parties and the annual Beatles Convention at the Adelphi Hotel.

Well,
knock me
down with
a feather!



PARROT KIDNAPPED, SHOT AND BITTEN BY SNAKE

An Amazonian parrot called Freddy Krueger has found its way back to the zoo from which it was stolen, while recovering from a four-year nightmare that saw it shot, kidnapped and bitten by a snake. As reported in *The Guardian*, Freddy was first brought to the zoo about four years ago, having been severely injured in a shootout between police and gangsters during a raid on the drug den where he had lived with his owner. Then, in April, the parrot was bitten on the leg by a snake – only to be stolen days later when three armed raiders burst into Cascavel's zoo. Two days later, however, Freddy returned, discovered by zoo staff beside his cage.



Meteor strikes not as rare as we think, says Nasa

Dangerous asteroids flying past Earth are not rare, and more meteor strikes happen than the public is aware of, the head of Nasa says.

"I wish I could tell you these events are exceptionally unique...but they're not," said Nasa administrator Jim Bridenstine at the International Academy of Astronautics' Planetary Defence Conference, according to the *Independent*. He said more work is now underway to protect our planet from the impact of meteor strikes. "What we're doing is very serious. We have to make sure

that people understand that this is not about Hollywood, it's not about movies. This is about protecting the only planet we know, right now, to host life – and that is the planet Earth."

Bridenstine gives the example of the Chelyabinsk event in 2013, in which a meteor about 65 feet across entered the Earth's atmosphere over Russia. Statistically, meteor events of this size happen once every 60 years, but Bridenstine pointed out there have been three such incidents over the last 100 years.



Don't do
presentation
- instead,
have a

CONVERSATION



As a SBM you may well find yourself having to present to an audience at some point. **GRAHAM SHAW**, author of *The Speaker's Coach*, explores the benefits of changing the way you think about public speaking

A presentation is rarely one-way. The audience is always responding in some way – through body language, eye contact, expressions and gestures. They might laugh, cheer or gasp in amazement.

When a speaker talks to an audience rather than at them, it can feel much better. The presentations are much more friendly and informal, helping rapport to be built. Here are some ways to give a great, conversational presentation.

1 THINK OF YOUR PRESENTATION AS IF IT IS A STORY

Presentations can seem like an ordeal to be got through for both presenter and audience. The set of slides can seem like a set of hurdles. However, in a way, a presentation really is a story; it has a beginning, middle and end. When you think of your presentation as a story, you will explain it better and people will absorb your message more easily.

2 THINK OF IT AS IF IT IS A CONVERSATION – AND YOU WILL ACT AS IF IT IS

The way you think affects how you come across and changes how the audience responds. That is the power of the mind. When you speak like it is a conversation, they feel as if you are relating to them more personally. Therefore, instead of being in a 'presenting' mindset, think as if it is a conversation.

We all want to feel calm when on stage and, though calmness is a useful state, a small dose of nerves can help your performance

3 PREPARE GOOD LINKS TO MAKE IT FLOW EASILY

A good conversation flows along – and a presentation should do the same. The way to achieve this is to make sure you have good links between one point and the next. These links act as signposts and keep people aware of how it all fits together. People like strong links because they can follow you more easily.

4 REGARD THE AUDIENCE AS IF THEY ARE FRIENDS YOU HAVE NEVER MET

I used to be apprehensive at the start of any training courses I was leading. I would wonder if some people would be difficult for me to manage. However, when I got to know the course participants, almost everyone always turned out to be very nice. Then something dawned on me. Instead of waiting to find out, perhaps I could decide from the beginning that they were all nice people – so, I thought of them as if they were friends I had never met. It made a huge difference to my confidence.

Therefore, think of your audience as if they are friends. It will positively change how you perceive them and will also influence how they respond – a win-win.

5 DO NOT READ – JUST TALK TO THE AUDIENCE

Do not read from a script or the slides, unless you need to quote something verbatim. Reading your presentation can make it seem stilted. People can see that you are reading, so it will come across as the opposite of conversational.

6 REMEMBER THAT NERVES ARE OK – BUT HERE ARE THREE GREAT TIPS TO MANAGE THEM

We all want to feel calm when on stage and, though calmness is a useful state, a small dose of nerves can help your performance.

Being too relaxed can lead to complacency. In sport, there are countless examples where the underdog beats the favourite; strong

favourites often cannot escape the mindset that they are bound to win. By contrast, underdogs often psych themselves up into a high-performance state – their focus and concentration is at its best and they are ‘ready to go’.

TIP ONE: identify what has got you into a high-performance state in other situations – use what’s worked for you before. Perhaps listening to certain music boosts your mood. Maybe what you wear affects your confidence. We are all different; do what works for you.

TIP TWO: create your routines for use in future talks – actors will often follow the same routine before a performance. Routines are useful ways to repeatedly access high-performance states and to reduce anxiety. Think about the build-up to your talk and what will work for you, such as arriving early; then use the same routine each time.

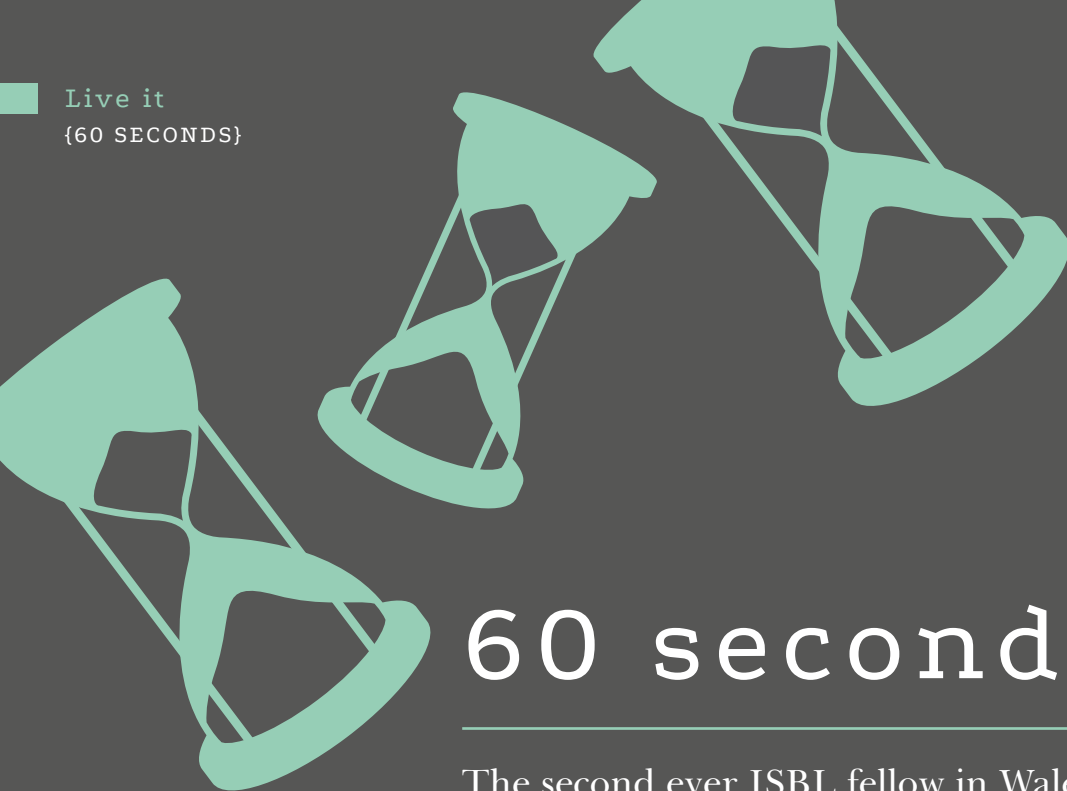
TIP THREE: if you feel too nervous, breathe deeply to re-centre yourself – guidance based upon the work of Wendy Palmer and Janet Crawford suggests we breathe in deeply, as if breathing upwards. Then, breathe out in a long breath, as if exhaling down the front of our body. Maintain an upright stance throughout. Imagine you have soft shoulders and relax them. Even after several breaths you can feel a difference as your attention is brought back to the present moment.

Remember, keep it conversational and enjoy your talk – and the audience will, too. ■

About the author

Graham Shaw is the author of *The Speaker’s Coach: 60 secrets to make your talk, speech or presentation amazing*, which is published by Pearson.

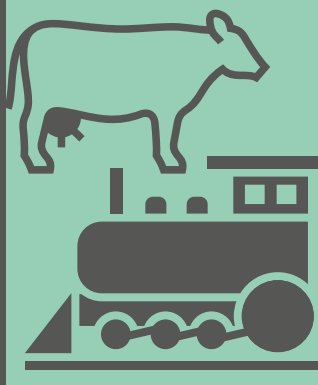




60 seconds with



Andy Heron, SBM at
The Maelor School in
Wrexham, North Wales



The second ever ISBL fellow in Wales, a daily round-trip commute of nearly two hours, herding cows and sheep off of the school premises...it's all in a day's work for **ANDY HERON**, SBM at The Maelor School in Wrexham, North Wales

How did you get to where you are today?

I left the RAF after 23 years and got a job in a school as a senior administrator in August 2006. After doing CSBM, DSBM and ADSBM in short succession I took on my current post as school business manager in October 2011.

Tell me something unusual or interesting about yourself.

Up until last weekend I had never seen one episode of *Line of Duty* – much to the amazement of some people on Twitter!

What's your favourite aspect of your job?

The variety – no two days are ever the same in trying to improve children's outcomes.

What do you do to de-stress after a long day?

I have a commute of 50 minutes each way and, by the time I get home, I am usually de-stressed enough not to incur the wrath of Mrs H! I have been cycling now for nearly two years and find it very useful to unwind and switch off from thinking about work.

No two days are ever the same in trying to improve children's outcomes

Funniest SBM moment you'd care to share?

Herding cows and sheep off of the school fields and playground!

What's been your greatest professional achievement to date?

Becoming a fellow of the ISBL – I was only the second one in Wales at the time.

How do you ensure that you continue to grow personally and professionally?

By networking and interacting with other professionals using social media, writing blogs and just generally trying to stay 'in the loop' on developments in the SBM world.

Where do you take inspiration from?

A wide variety of people, in truth. I like positivity and people that have overcome hurdles – be they small or large – to get to a better place, personally or professionally.

If there was one thing about your job you could change – what would it be?

To be able to create more time to do everything to a level of complete satisfaction – this, in reality, does not happen often, as other pressures take over.

Can you describe your role in five words?

Demanding, lonely, rewarding, all-consuming (at times), different. ■

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