

SUMMER 2021

Education Choices



THE KEY TO YOUR CHILD'S SUCCESS

BATTLEGROUND OF THE SEXES

David James (LEH) debates the pros and cons of single sex education

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:

The Value of Bursaries at Cranleigh School, Surrey and the Ascent Programme at Emanuel, London

BLM

One year on...

Plus: More BAME students being included at leading universities



Smashing their way to the top!

Ewell Castle Tennis Academy and Alison Battista give some top tennis tips!

INTERVIEW:

Supporting Your Child with Additional Learning Needs and see our podcast pages interviewing leading Headteachers





Lancing College

Senior School & Sixth Form

**Be inspired
Be brilliant
Be you**

**13-18 years, co-educational boarding and day school
Registration for Year 9 entry in 2024 now open**

**FIND OUT MORE
LANCINGCOLLEGE.CO.UK**

As featured in THE CHOICES MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2021
Registered Charity Number 1076483

**YOUR
INCREDIBLE
JOURNEY**





32

03 Top ten summer book suggestions (7-13 years)

A young reader, Olivia, makes some useful book recommendations for the summer

06 Seahorse Nurseries are expanding!

Seahorse Nurseries are opening Wimbledon Park 2

07 Bridge Lane Nursery in Battersea and Phileas Fox Nursery School in Maida Vale

What do they offer parents and children - would they suit your child?

08 Reading and literacy can have a life changing impact

Tonies® has partnered with the Book Trust and Cressida Cowell MBE's 'Life-changing Libraries' project

09 How learning in the great outdoors evolves into a sense of responsibility for nature

The importance of playing and learning outdoors, St Catherine's School, Bramley

10 Helping your child prepare for Reception or a new school

By Ffion Robinson, Head of Churcher's College Junior School

12 Why consider Surbiton High Boys' and Girls' Prep schools?

Two unique Prep schools in Surbiton, Surrey

13 New Headmistress appointed at Sherborne Prep

Mrs Natalie Bone appointed as Head of Sherborne Prep from 1 September 2021.

14 Full STEAM ahead at Parsons Green Prep

Parsons Green Prep have added an 'A' to their STEM learning



EDUCATION CORNER PODCAST INTERVIEWS

16 Saint Christina's School and Edgeborough School

Interviews with Mr. Alastair Gloag and Mr. Dan Thornburn

17 Blundell's School, Devon

Interview with Mr. Bart Wielenga

18 Sutton High School

Interview with Mrs. Beth Dawson

19 Bruern Abbey School and More House School

Interviews with Mr. John Floyd and Mr. Jon Hetherington

SPECIAL FEATURE TENNIS

26 Will it be a Grand Slam at Wimbledon?

Why are so many young people playing tennis and what are they gaining from their tournaments?

27 Smashing their way to the top!

Ewell Castle Tennis Academy

28 Tennis features

from Rowan Prep School and Surbiton High School

29 Tennis features

from Reed's School and Putney High School

30 Advice on Ratings, Rankings and Performance Tennis

From Ewell Castle School Tennis Academy

DESIGN: PETER CHARLES COVER PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK WEEKS

20 Supporting Your Child with Additional Learning Needs

Suzanne discusses how she has supported her son (a twin) with his additional learning needs both inside and outside school

24 XULA face masks – the next generation

A dynamic new design that will support both young and old people with disabilities

32 The Ascent programme at Emanuel School, London

Emanuel is working hard to attempt to help close the learning gap many disadvantaged children are experiencing...

33 The Value of Bursaries

Transforming communities at Cranleigh School, Surrey

34 New Headmaster appointed at Wetherby

Senior School and Tonbridge announce merger with The New Beacon Prep School

35 Unmasking - returning to school without a face covering

A sixth form student at Lancing College, Sussex, writes about the feelings associated with being able to mix with her peers again without wearing face masks

36 My first year as Headmistress at Wimbledon High School

Fionnuala Kennedy, Headmistress at Wimbledon High (GDST) discusses her first year as Headmistress amid a pandemic...

37 Truro High School run a business initiative

Top girls' school puts business and enterprise front and centre with pioneering project that sees students named CEO of their own commercial business



38 Battleground of the sexes

Sifting through centuries of debate, LEH Deputy Head, David James, ponders the future of this approach in a society that is increasingly progressive, meritocratic and diverse

42 Why consider Lady Eleanor Holles?

A selective Prep and Senior school in Hampton, Richmond upon Thames

43 Looking Beyond the Grades

Careers advice from Surbiton High School, Surrey

44 Go racing with F1 in your school!

An exciting STEM programme for schools

46 Finding a career in software development

Newcastle College model a new qualification and enable students to find employment within a year

47 Our plans for the year ahead, will universities be going back to face to face lectures?

University of Bath and Ella Barker (student) reflect on the future for many students in tertiary education

48 Preparing yourself mentally for university – some top tips for freshers

Anisa, a student at Exeter University, makes some suggestions for next years freshers

50 Rethinking university options - going through Clearing

Many students are increasingly using Clearing to change their choices, University of Hertfordshire findings

52 New scholarship programmes at Goldsmiths and BAME representation in universities

Diversity focuses by both Goldsmiths, University of London, and Ella Barker (student)

53 The Rise of the University Podcast

A new approach to learning outside the lecture room, SOAS University of London

54 One Year On: Inclusivity & Practical Solidarity

Black Lives Matter feature by Ayesha Rana

56 ESCAPE HOMES - Finding your inner peace...

Some useful suggestions on improving your home by Marie Noelle Swiderski, Galuchat Design

58 An exciting time for buying property!

Property news by Ben Rivera, Rivera Property Consultants



“At our school, any student can succeed in anything.”

Education Corner Podcast with Mr Bart Wielenga, Headmaster at Blundell's, Devon

Go to [\(link\)](#) to hear all about life at Blundell's and the advantages of boarding in Devon.

Blundell's is an up-and-coming school set in the rural location of Tiverton, Devon. It aims to provide all students with a solid grounding in skills that will allow them access to unlimited opportunities in later life.

Blundell's has an increasingly diverse student body. As a result of being a boarding school as well as a day school, Blundell's welcomes in many families and pupils who have come from all around the world including: India, France, Spain, Germany, China and Kenya. One of the school's main aims is to provide support and opportunities for as many children as possible. This can be seen in the endowment fund which they are currently setting up so that “students can thrive regardless of their financial resources.” In addition to this, the school currently offers a range of scholarships and bursaries at 11+, 13+ and 16+ in Academics, Music, Drama, Art and Sport. The school can also offer up to 95% bursary support, which in some circumstances can even be increased to 100%.

When asked why the school motto was “Roots and Wings,” Bart explained that, “Of course, getting a good set of grades matters, as grades open up opportunities, but really, it's the other skills that are developed at school that are important, as



these are the skills that students need to be successful in society.” This can be seen in their new enrichment programme, which involves a number of lessons a week dedicated to well-being, character building and services to the community. These sessions run throughout all year groups, with programmes tailored to the students' needs, encouraging them to, “enrich themselves outside of the traditional academic programme.”

Another unique aspect of the school's learning programme is the addition of more specific GCSE options such as Photography, Music Tech and Film Studies. This allows students to better enjoy their educational experience as they are allowed to explore subjects



they have a genuine interest in. In addition to this, the school (in part due to its fantastic location) offers a wide variety of sports such as rugby, cricket, horse riding, netball and even sailing!

Listen to our Education Corner podcast to find out about the annual Russell run, which alumni come back to participate in - both young and old!

“It comes down to this idea of finding something for everyone, unlocking people's passion and enthusiasm so that when they are at school they really engage as they always have things to look forward to.”

[CLICK HERE](#) to listen to the podcast!

→ **TURN TO P48** to read about preparing for Exeter University



Full STEAM ahead at Parsons Green Prep

Parsons Green Prep have added an 'A' to their STEM learning



The world of education is no stranger to acronyms and, as with everyone else, these tend to get longer with every

passing year (anyone remember PSE?). The latest subject to grow in this way is STEAM (formerly STEM.) So what is this new letter? A is for Art, and we welcome it to the team.

We have heard for many years that the workplace is changing and that the workers of the future will require quite different skills to the workers of today. Schools have been quick to react, removing subjects from distinct silos and amalgamating them into things such as Humanities and Creative Learning. In addition

to these subjects, chess is a daily activity at Parsons Green Prep, taught by the talented Viv Richardson; children and parents value it hugely for all the strategic and planning skills it draws out. And now STEAM is coming right to the fore. This subject combines the skills of research, creativity, planning, prediction and improvisation, to name but a few. Children with an aptitude for STEAM will be in hot demand in the workplace of the future.

At Parsons Green Prep we already devote significant curriculum time to these subjects. STEAM subjects encourage children to become confident in accepting challenges, in researching and collaborating. We want our children to be able to think for themselves, confidently hypothesise, accurately analyse data and text, synthesise information accurately and apply their knowledge to new situations. They should learn to deal with unexpected results and be adept at starting all over again without missing a beat. Most importantly they need to be engaged and actively involved in their learning and able to challenge their own understanding of the world.

Some challenges reside within discrete lessons (building a balloon powered car, for example), whereas others are school-wide and open ended. This year the whole school is involved in

investigating and contributing to PGP's move to carbon neutrality within three years. From counting the recycling bins to identifying appropriate locations for solar panels, everybody has a role to play and different children will contribute, stress-test and give feedback on different areas of research. By raising the profile of STEAM further, we wish to stimulate the brain, giving it free rein to create, rather than simply to replicate what is already known; to enhance our children's critical thinking skills so they are able to draw on a wide range of sources and develop sophisticated study skills.

The addition of Art to the quartet is a welcome and long overdue one. All the work done in STEAM is inherently artistic. The quest for elegant solutions to practical problems runs throughout our current work. Art underpins both the form and the function of everything we create. To quote Steve Jobs, 'design is not just what it looks and feels like. Design is how it works'. Mathematical concepts are evident as art all around us, from the snowflake to the shell of a snail to the Corinthian Column. Every successful design is a combination of function and aesthetic and both are essential to the products we make and the services they perform.

So we are delighted to add the A to the team. At PGP we are developing the designs for



“So what is this new letter? A is for Art, and we welcome it to the team.”

Will it be a Grand Slam at Wimbledon?

Why are so many young people playing tennis and what are they gaining from their tournaments?



Many children are increasingly choosing tennis as their main sport and are showing a dedication and commitment beyond their years. Many parents feel that tennis offers something that is fun, and that the children are learning to participate in a game that they either win or lose, which teaches them resilience and determination.

This is not to say that the children do not equally enjoy swimming, football, hockey, cricket and other types of sport, but increasingly for many their sport of preference is tennis. Playing tennis can also be something that can help them find places at schools, universities and

even in the working world.

Generally, it is suggested that children need to start playing by the time they are six or seven, if they want to enter the competition circuit, and usually begin competing at the age of nine (if not, it may be too late)! On the basis that many professional tennis players have a rate of winning of only 52% of the games that they play, these children are learning at an early age how to win and lose with grace, developing the all-important social skills as well as a determination and resolve that can support a successful adult life. The children see losing as part of their development. This is a life

skill and many adults struggle to bounce back from life's knocks in the same way.

Nowadays, tennis can be played professionally for much longer and a career in tennis does not cut off at twenty-five years old. Nadal and Federer are true examples of players who remain on the professional circuit into their late thirties. Young people can opt for either the professional route or delay this path and follow their university careers through to their early twenties (perhaps with a tennis scholarship under their belt) and then become professional when they complete their studies.

Thank you to Georgie Wilkins, Maria Rodriguez and Audrey Childe Freeman for their insights.

TEN TOP TIPS (from parents):

- Introduce tennis when they are young
- Find a local tennis centre/club - there are plenty!
- Don't rush into competitions - you don't want to put them off!
- Keep playing other sports
- Fitness is important
- Eat healthily
- Hours of training = age - playing once a week is not enough to compete
- Be prepared for early morning starts and chaperoning them to competitions
- Take part in tournaments when they are ready (which will help their rankings over time)
- Keep it fun!

“Life is like a game of tennis; the player who serves well seldom loses.” (UNKNOWN)



“The sorts of families we work best for are those who have got children in the mainstream but they are struggling and there is a concern that without proper concerted intervention they are going to slide out of the mainstream and into special needs schools.”

Education Corner Podcast spoke to Mr. John Floyd, Headmaster of Bruern Abbey

Bruern Abbey specialises in preparing boys aged 8-13 with learning difficulties for Common Entrance.

Some of the highlights:

When asked what qualities a child develops through being at Bruern Abbey, Mr. Floyd replies, “Their self-confidence and self-belief increases, they get a better understanding of themselves both in terms of their strength and weaknesses,” and follows up saying, “I think they also develop a level of empathy; they realise that it has been tough for them in their schools previously and there is a collegiality and a friendliness amongst the children.”

[CLICK HERE to listen to the podcast!](#)

THE KEY TOPICS:

- The specialised support that Bruern provides for boys with learning difficulties
- The relationships Bruern Abbey has formed with leading senior schools to allow boys to apply later on in their school career
- The flexible boarding opportunities offered, which make it very easy for families in London to still receive the support they need
- The specialist support available from on-site occupational and speech



- and language therapists
- The curriculum, which has double the amount of English and Maths than a mainstream school to improve the boys’ literacy and numeracy skills
- The preparation for Common Entrance and the success of the boys that leave Bruern Abbey

“More House is full of really bright, really intelligent young men who would struggle to achieve their full potential within a more mainstream school environment.”

Education Corner podcast interview with Mr. Jon Hetherington, Headmaster of More House School in Frensham.



More House provides education to boys ages 8-18 who have learning difficulties such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Developmental Language Disorders.

When discussing the learning support throughout the school, Jon states that “every single one of our teachers has a very keen awareness of what the potential barriers are for

our sorts of pupils and they deliver in a way that supports neurodiversity.”

When discussing the facilities and extra-curricular opportunities, Jon says “Education has to be fun; it has to be exciting and our boys have to be able to see their success and be excited by it.”

[CLICK HERE to listen to the podcast!](#)

THE KEY TOPICS:

- The specialist support available for boys with additional learning needs
- Entry points from the Junior School to the Sixth Form
- The extensive facilities available ranging from in house occupational and speech therapists to a swimming pool
- The mainstream curriculum that is taught in a neurodiversity-friendly way
- The BTEC alternatives for A Levels and GCSEs - which are easier and what do More House offer?
- The boarding opportunities and community feel of More House

The Ascent programme at Emanuel School, London

Emanuel is providing Saturday classes to 32 children from local partner primary schools each Saturday morning in an attempt to help close the learning gap many children are experiencing...



Emanuel is providing Saturday classes to 32 children from local partner primary schools each Saturday morning in an attempt to help close the learning gap many children are experiencing..

Emanuel School is based in Wandsworth, an inner city borough in Southwest London with high levels of deprivation. We are an independent secondary school with 1,000 pupils from Year 6 to Year 13.

Emanuel School strives to be a good neighbour through building and nurturing mutually beneficial relationships with local schools, charities and community organisations in Fulham, Lambeth and Wandsworth – a tradition established by our founder Lady Anne Dacre in 1594.

Our programmes throughout the pandemic are indicative of our ethos. We supported those most in need in our local community by delivering over 11,000 meals, thousands of books for children to read at home and over 260 digital devices. We continue to seek ways to help close the gap for pupils whose education has been most impacted by school closures; our newly launched Ascent programme is central to this work.

The Ascent programme consists of weekly Saturday morning sessions at Emanuel School. Our focus is Year 5 children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are not meeting national standards in the core subjects

of literacy and maths. We know there are considerable gaps in their knowledge that need to be addressed to provide a strong foundation for learning moving forward. Ascent, developed in collaboration with staff at our partner schools, enables these pupils to catch up on vital work they have missed, solidify their basic knowledge and skills and build their confidence.

Taught by Emanuel staff and supported by an enthusiastic cohort of Sixth form and Year 10 volunteers, each Saturday morning 32 children from our local partner primary schools participate in the programme. Each Saturday session consists of booster curriculum-linked lessons in maths and literacy supplemented by interactive, fun, hands-on science workshops and co-curricular lessons (Drama, Art and Sport). Science has been particularly popular - equipped with goggles and lab coats, pupils have conducted experiments using Bunsen burners, dissected owl pellets and are learning to use microscopes.

Recognising the benefits of the scheme, Emanuel staff have been keen to take part. Equally, our Sixth form volunteers have coached children during their academic lessons and designed and led the lively, action-packed games sessions. Our students are thriving on responsibility and are developing confidence and empathy. They also have the opportunity to develop their leadership, organisational and facilitation skills.

The Ascent programme will run on nine Saturday mornings at Emanuel in the Summer term, with an additional two-day session at the end of our term before the state schools break up for the summer holidays. Children have loved the sessions so far and have been keen to return each Saturday morning.

Ascent is one of many initiatives within our partnership programme. Further programmes including GCSE revision clinics, online student-led mentoring and a Sixth Form tuition and university coaching scheme are in the pipeline, alongside our flagship Primary Ambitions Year 6-focused enrichment programme and thriving bursary scheme.



BY LISA IRWIN Deputy Development and Community Partnerships Director

Battleground of the sexes

Many believe that children benefit from single sex schools and other argue that they exploit sexual stereotypes and gender inequality



For some, single-sex schools are centres of excellence. For others, they entrench sexual stereotypes and gender inequality. Sifting through centuries of debate, girls' school Deputy Head, David James, ponders the future of this approach in a society that is increasingly progressive, meritocratic and diverse.

Winchester College's recent decision to admit girls into its sixth form from 2022 came after 122 years of discussion (which the Headteacher, Tim Hands, drily described as "speedy for us"). It made headlines around the world, but

also raised some questions. Most obviously: what does it say about us that, even during a pandemic, an event as seemingly unimportant as a change in the internal admissions policy of a school that charges tens of thousands of pounds a year can result in acrimonious online debate, and generate news stories in tabloids and broadsheets alike? No doubt the familiar provocations of class and elitism play into much of the confected outrage. But deeper than this is the perennial debate about single-sex schools. For many, these schools are a hot-button issue:

New scholarship programme at Goldsmiths

Goldsmiths', University of London, international edge boosted by new Asian scholarships

This year, Goldsmiths, University of London, has partnered with the British Council and the GREAT Britain Campaign to offer scholarships to students from India, Thailand and China. The financial support is for postgraduate-taught courses in Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship; Computing; Design; Management Studies; and Music.

The scholarship programme offers support of a minimum of £10,000 to students pursuing one-year postgraduate study in the UK.

The GREAT Scholarships 2021 programme, launched by the British Council together with 41 UK universities, supports students from Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand to access world-class UK higher education opportunities. The GREAT scholarship programme aims to widen access to UK education in countries where interest in studying here is high.

Goldsmiths, in south-east London, welcomes applications each year from across the world. The university has a thriving international community, with students and staff from over 135 countries. Through financially supporting and welcoming the brightest international students to the UK, the GREAT scholarships will further support Goldsmiths' principles of diversity and inclusivity – and shows why in 2019 it was voted in the top 100 most international universities in the world by QS World University Rankings.

Goldsmiths is known worldwide for its teaching in the arts and creative industries, but offers subjects ranging from computing to law. Six out of 20 of Goldsmiths' academic departments were selected to be part of the scholarship programme, but many of the degrees at Goldsmiths are interdisciplinary, and students are encouraged to make connections between different subject areas and view their learning in the context of the wider world.



More BAME students being included at leading universities

Following last year's Black Lives Matter protests, almost every university pledged to do more to make their campuses more inclusive and diverse.

In 2020, all but one Russell group university managed to accept more BAME students in 2020 than 2019, with both Oxford and Cambridge accepting a record number of BAME students.

This year the University of Cambridge accepted a record number of BAME students, making up 29.3% of UK undergraduates admitted, compared to the 27.8% that were admitted the previous year. In addition, a record number of state school students were also accepted with the proportion rising from 68.7% to 70.6%.

To further this, The

University of Cambridge announced in January that students from disadvantaged backgrounds who fail to meet its high entry requirements would be given a chance to study there through a one-year foundation course, with 50 places available for students who achieve three B

grades at A-level.

Similarly, more than a fifth of undergraduates (23.6%) who were admitted to Oxford were from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. Students who were from state schools received 68.7% of all offers at Oxford this year. One other positive finding has been that the ratio between admissions from students of a socially disadvantaged background has fallen from a ratio of 7.6:1 to 6.3:1, which Oxford has said was well ahead of the target agreed with the Office for Students (OfS).

BY ELLA BARKER



CONTACT

