



PREP TEACHING AND LEARNING

festival

09:00 Registration and exhibition opens - refreshments available

09:30 Introduction from Emma Goldsmith, Head at Dragon School

09:45 Keynote: How can we truly rewild childhood? - Hilary Cremin

10:45 Refreshments

11:00 Seminar 1

11:45 Seminar 2

12:30 Lunch

13:15 Panel and Q+A - Future proofing our learners for a new world

13:45 Keynote: Using Picture books as launchpads for creativity - Mini Grey

14:30 Seminar 3

15:15 Finish



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Seminar 1	Seminar 2	Seminar 3
Supporting executive function development through adaptive learning and universal design - Victoria Bagnall	Supporting executive function development through adaptive learning and universal design - Victoria Bagnall	Teaching difficult histories to young people through objects - Debbie Moss
Oracy for all - Jason Buckley	Cognitive Load Theory in Practice - Layla Hewitt	Relationships enable resilience: Building the foundations for regulation, adaptability, and lifelong learning - Naomi Ashman
How to introduce a critical thinking approach to teaching and learning - Dee Alder	Write Inspired: unlock purposeful meaningful writing in your school - Philip Davis	Write Inspired: unlock purposeful meaningful writing in your school - Philip Davis
Developing challenge for all in mathematics - Rob Lightfoot	Developing challenge for all in mathematics - Rob Lightfoot	From Vision to Classroom: Designing a Future-Ready Curriculum - Nisha Kaura
Character and outdoor education - Andy Carley	Unlocking learning potential: The importance of neuromotor development in early education - Elizabeth Cordle	Unlocking calm and confidence - Jenny Wannberg-James
Problem-based learning: can it impact real world outcomes? - Alex Kemsley	Dys- what? - Rebecca Enock	Careers and future skills in a Prep School - Connie Watts
	Deep Work: rediscovering the lost arts of focus and concentration - Colin MacIntosh	

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**Thank you to our speakers representing
the following schools:**



Warwick Preparatory School

Abbot's Hill 



PRESTFELDE



ORWELL PARK SCHOOL



HAMPTON
PRE-PREP & PREP SCHOOL



CARGILFIELD

Headliners



Professor Hilary Cremin **Head of the Faculty of Education at Cambridge University**

Hot on the heels of publishing her new book calling for a radical, system-wide reinvention of education, we are really excited to be being joined by Professor Hilary Cremin.

Specialising in peace education and conflict transformation in schools and communities, Hilary has recently published 'Rewilding Education: Rethinking the Place of Schools Now and in the Future', which suggests making education less predictable and measurable, shaping it for the adults of tomorrow.



Mini Grey **Award-winning Illustrator and Author**

Born in a mini car in a car park in South Wales, Mini worked as a theatre designer, then a primary school teacher, before beginning making children's picture books, some of which have won awards.

Mini's books include The Last Wolf, Toys in Space, Biscuit Bear (winner of the Nestle Children's Book Award) and Traction Man in Here (winner of the Boston Horn Book Award) and The Adventures of the Dish and the Spoon (winner of the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal), among many others. One of her latest productions is The Greatest Show on Earth, the 4.6 billion year story of life on our planet, told by Rod the Roach and his troupe of insects.

Mini lives with her family in Oxford.



Speakers a-z

Dee Alder

Deputy Head at Warwick Preparatory School

Dee is an experienced primary school teacher with over 30 years' practice in state and independent schools. She has held leadership roles in PE, Science, Mathematics and was Head of KS2 before becoming Deputy Head. Dee is also an ISI Team Inspector.

Dee champions learning that encourages children to ask questions, make decisions and apply their knowledge. She has successfully implemented teaching approaches that promote critical thinking, oracy, problem-solving, and pupils taking responsibility for their own progress.



Naomi Ashman

Director of Learning Success at The Blue Coat School

With 18 years' experience working across state and independent primary schools, Naomi is dedicated to removing barriers to learning so every child can reach their potential. She builds strong partnerships with staff, pupils, and families to nurture a culture of belonging, support, and high expectations for all learners. As a former foster carer and adoptive parent, Naomi is deeply committed to advocating for vulnerable children and helping pupils overcome disadvantage. She is passionate about driving inclusive practices, empowering fellow educators, and designing high-quality professional development that equips educators to meet the complex, evolving needs of modern learners.



Victoria Bagnall

Founder and Director - Connections in Minds

Victoria is Co-founder & Director of Training and Development at Connections in Mind and a specialist in executive function and neuroinclusive education. She pioneered executive function coaching in the UK and co-founded Connections in Mind and International Executive Function Coaching Certification (IEFCC). A former teacher, Victoria now works with schools, universities, healthcare organisations and global companies to translate research on executive function into practical strategies that support learning, wellbeing and belonging. She has trained organisations including EY, the NHS and the University of California, Berkeley. Victoria is the author of *The Neuroinclusive Educator*, which explores how classrooms can support the development of executive function skills and create environments where every learner has the opportunity to flourish.



Speakers a-z

Jason Buckley

Founder and Director of The Philosophy Man and Oracy for Schools

Jason is the Founder and Director of The Philosophy Man and Oracy for Schools. A life-long philosopher and former English teacher, Jason is now an internationally renowned trainer, writer and speaker on oracy, P4C, and stretching the more-able. He is author of four books, with more in the pipeline. Jason is also Director of Studies at GIFT, and also an outdoor education company, Outspark. In his spare time, he's a storyteller and improviser, and all these skills come together in his lively training, with minimum of Death by PowerPoint!



Andy Carley

Director and Founder of SOuL

Andy Carley is the Director and founder of School Outdoor Learning (SOuL), a UK-based organisation that specialises in inspiring and enabling high-quality outdoor learning in schools. He has over 30 years of experience in outdoor education, leadership development, and experiential learning. Andy's belief lies deeply in character education and experiential learning. His work with SOuL includes creating outdoor classrooms, natural playscapes, and nature-rich learning environments, as well as providing staff training and resources that help schools embed outdoor learning into their curriculum and culture. Andy is known for his commitment to helping pupils discover their strengths, regulate their emotions, and build confidence through outdoor experiences. His ethos is grounded in the belief that learning outside is "vital," providing opportunities to thrive beyond the constraints of traditional classrooms.



Elizabeth Cordle

Founder/Director and Chartered Physiotherapist, Corefulness

Elizabeth Cordle is an experienced Chartered Physiotherapist with 27 years in practice, specialising in neuro-musculoskeletal rehabilitation across all ages. Having worked in the NHS in London, she started her own medical services company. She has a particular interest in hypermobility and motor skills and their effect on both physical function and brain development, shaped by years of collaboration with leading experts. Passionate about early intervention, Elizabeth developed a strong interest in how motor immaturity can hinder a child's ability to learn. This led her to create Corefulness® - a practical, inclusive, evidence-based programme designed to mature essential movement skills to:

- Improve school readiness
- Help children break down barriers to learning
- Maximise children's learning potential



Speakers a-z

Philip Davis

Founder of Write Inspired

Philip Davis is a teacher, trainer and founder of Write Inspired helping people rediscover the joy of writing. His work is grounded in the simple but powerful belief: everyone has the potential to be creative. He helps teachers unlock imagination and engagement. He has worked throughout the UK and globally delivering his acclaimed Inset and classroom sessions. This unique in house CPD, where teachers see Write Inspired in action is very popular. He has worked as an honorary research associate at Kings College London looking at the importance of creativity in writing.



Rebecca Enock

Abbot's Hill School

Rebecca Enock is the SENDCo at Abbot's Hill School, bringing over 25 years of teaching experience and specialist expertise in supporting neurodiverse learners in independent, international and state schools. As a Specialist Teacher and Educational Assessor with a master's degree in Inclusive Education, Rebecca is dedicated to building inclusive learning environments. Rebecca works closely with pupils, families, and staff to reduce barriers, enhance early identification, and promote strategies that empower learners with profiles such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and other neurodiverse needs. Her practice reflects a deep commitment to understanding each learner's perspective and promoting approaches that help every child thrive.



Layla Hewitt

Class Teacher, STEM/Science Lead and Educational Visits

Coordinator at Abbot's Hill School

Layla is a primary school teacher at Abbot's Hill School with a particular interest in STEM education and developing pupils' critical thinking skills. She leads STEM and Science across the Prep School and coordinates educational visits, supporting colleagues to create enriching opportunities that extend learning beyond the classroom. She is passionate about designing learning experiences that encourage curiosity, questioning and problem-solving, helping pupils to think deeply and apply their knowledge in meaningful ways. Her work focuses on creating engaging classroom environments where children feel confident to explore ideas and develop independence as learners. She has also recently contributed to the Journal of Emergent Science writing a practitioner perspective focusing on critical thinking in primary science lessons. Alongside her work in education, Layla also proudly serves as a Magistrate in her local community.



Speakers a-z

Nisha Kaura

Founder and Director of F&T Advisors Ltd

Nisha Kaura is a nationally recognised educational leader and founder of F&T Advisors, a consultancy driving transformation across the independent school sector. With over two decades of senior leadership experience, including headships at leading UK schools, she excels in interim leadership that restores stability, rebuilds trust and delivers measurable strategic progress. Her track record includes rapid cultural turnaround, full ISI compliance, operational redesign and award-winning academic and co-curricular transformation. Formerly a global programme leader in the pharmaceutical sector and an ISI Senior Inspector, she was honoured at Buckingham Palace for her national service to education.



Alex Kemsley

Orwell Park Prep School

Alex works as the Deputy Head (Academic) at Orwell Park Prep School in Suffolk and currently teaches French and Latin. She has previously worked as a Head of Year and Head of Classics at senior schools in East Anglia. She has a particular interest in the fields of curriculum development and teacher training, especially with regards to the increasing prevalence of AI use among both pupils and teachers.



Rob Lightfoot

CEO, NACE

Rob Lightfoot has over 30 years' experience of working in educational settings. He took on the role of NACE CEO in 2021, drawing on his experiences from a wide range of senior management roles.

Rob has delivered training to thousands of teachers and leaders, including courses on curriculum design, mathematics and how to lead on more able provision within an educational setting. He has also worked previously as a Lead Practitioner on Curriculum Design for the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. Working with NACE's research institution partners, he has studied the resilience of students in mathematics and the increase of perfectionist characteristics in young adolescents.

As NACE CEO, Rob has a strong focus on the continuous development of NACE's research and CPD programmes. He believes passionately that all learners should have the opportunity to achieve to the very best of their ability, no matter what barriers to learning they may face.



Speakers a-z

Colin MacIntosh

Headmaster at Cargilfield School

Colin has worked in Prep Schools for nearly 25 years in various roles, including Head of English, Head of Football, Housemaster, Deputy Head and Headmaster. In August last year he fulfilled a dream to live and work in Edinburgh when he took up the post of Headmaster of Cargilfield School. He first fell in love with Prep School life at the age of 7 and to this day he enjoys the huge variety and challenges of life in this sector, both in and out of the classroom. He loves the theatre, fiction, stand-up comedy, and he is a big sports fan - although he supports a very bad football team indeed.



Debbie Moss

Freelance Educator at The National Holocaust Museum

Debbie is a Freelance Holocaust Educator for the National Holocaust Centre as well as for the Holocaust Educational Trust, regularly teaching on the Lessons from Auschwitz programme and the new award-winning Testimony 360 programme. She taught in both Primary and Secondary schools across London and Nottingham for twenty-three years before leading a PGCE course subject at Keele University for eight years. Debbie holds an MA in Creative Writing from Nottingham University and was awarded a grant from the Arts Council for developing her writing. Debbie's first book for young people, *Angel's Teeth*, was published last year.



Jenny Wannberg- James

Year 4 Teacher at Hampton Pre-Prep and Prep

Jenny is a teacher trained in Sweden with over 25 years' experience across Scandinavian and UK schools. Blending the best of both systems, she specialises in academic wellbeing, guiding her pupils towards growth in confidence, understanding themselves through neuroscience and everyday mindfulness. Since parents asked for her sessions to be shared many years ago, she's led workshops for parents, delivered inset days for teachers, and brought to light her experience in her book supporting families through the 11+ process. Her work centres on making learning calmer, more accessible and sustainable for every child, and she remains fully committed as a full-time teacher.



Speakers a-z

Connie Watts

Deputy headteacher (Teaching and Learning) at Prestfelde

At 18 Connie was very keen to escape the tranquil town of Shrewsbury and which led her to her French and Italian studies at The University of Manchester! She enjoyed a year teaching English in Trieste, Italy which lead her to completing a PGCE at The University of Oxford. Connie taught languages in maintained secondary schools and was a head of MFL before moving back to the tranquil town of Shrewsbury and start a role in the independent sector. The opportunity to work as head of PSHE across a prep school was an expected career move which really changed her whole teaching career. Connie became Deputy Head Teaching and Learning in 2023 and now oversees curriculum, assessment and professional development.



Seminar Session 1

Supporting Executive Function Development Through Adaptive Learning and Universal Design - Victoria Bagnall

Executive function skills such as planning, organisation, emotional regulation and flexible thinking play a central role in learning, behaviour and wellbeing. They are also now recognised as one of the core areas of development within the current SEND reform consultation in England.

In this session, Victoria explores how adaptive pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning can help create classroom environments that support the development of executive function skills for all learners. Practical strategies will be shared to help educators reduce barriers, increase engagement and build classrooms where more learners can thrive.

Oracy for All - Jason Buckley

Oracy is the word on everyone's lips, but what does it really look like in the classroom? Oracy for All is a high-impact session that focuses on key principles that can be applied in all contexts and subjects. This session is grounded in our tried-and-trusted principles of oracy covered in the book 'Help Me Find My Voice' (copy included if you attend the session) - including how to engage children who are "playground-confident, classroom-shy" and the importance of "Small talk before big talk" among many more.

We will:

- Unpick why some pupils clam up in classrooms even though they thrive socially, and what we can do about it
- Reveal strategies that help children warm up to meaningful talk
- Share questions that unlock speech confidence
- Explore how to embed oracy techniques into existing curriculum time rather than adding extra workload.

How to introduce a critical thinking approach to teaching and learning - Dee Alder

In this ever-changing world, where we are constantly bombarded by disinformation, our children need to be taught the value of questioning and examining evidence rather than accepting information at face value. It is essential that they can think both analytically and creatively and be able to adapt when necessary. The cognitive skills we need to teach, practise and instil can begin at the primary level, where children can learn to reason for themselves, trust their own judgement and apply their knowledge to solve 'big questions'. In this session, Dee will suggest how to initiate a change in approach to teaching and learning that promotes Critical Thinking and will share some 'quick wins' for the classroom to take away and use immediately.



Seminar Session 1

Developing challenge for all in mathematics - Rob Lightfoot

In this session with NACE CEO Rob Lightfoot, delegates will:

- Consider what we mean by challenge in mathematics
- Explore tasks that promote cognitive challenge
- Develop our ability to support children to a higher level of thinking in mathematics

Character and outdoor education - Andy Carley

Andy will lead an engaging and thought-provoking seminar on Teaching for Character (TLC - Teamwork, Leadership and Communication) during the Festival, utilising his expertise in designing powerful character-based learning that nurtures curiosity, empathy, resilience, growth mindset, teamwork, independence, risk-taking, determination and creativity.

During the seminar, attendees will explore SOuL's three-step approach to structuring sessions that promote student autonomy, progressive challenge and meaningful reflection.

Problem based learning: can it impact real world outcomes? - Alex Kemsley

Technology now permeates every aspect of life, while society grows increasingly individualistic amid the looming threats of climate catastrophe and global conflict. Many pupils, shaped by meritocratic systems and parental expectations, adopt a binary "win or lose" mindset with a distinctly transactional, career-focused outlook. The challenge, therefore, is how to rekindle a genuine love of learning and preserve breadth within the curriculum - promoting intellectual curiosity for its own sake while still preparing pupils for a future evolving faster than any curriculum.

Enter problem-based learning! Existing research evidences its impact on pupil motivation and engagement. By encouraging pupils to grapple with real-world issues through a more collective and constructive lens, we can nurture a generation of critical thinkers - individuals equipped not merely to be passengers in the world, but to be thoughtful, proactive problem-solvers.



Seminar Session 2

Supporting Executive Function Development Through Adaptive Learning and Universal Design - Victoria Bagnall

Executive function skills such as planning, organisation, emotional regulation and flexible thinking play a central role in learning, behaviour and wellbeing. They are also now recognised as one of the core areas of development within the current SEND reform consultation in England.

In this session, Victoria explores how adaptive pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning can help create classroom environments that support the development of executive function skills for all learners. Practical strategies will be shared to help educators reduce barriers, increase engagement and build classrooms where more learners can thrive.

Cognitive Load Theory in Practice - Layla Hewitt

Are you looking for ways to stop your pupils being overloaded with information in your lessons? We will look at ways to deepen pupils knowledge and help their recall of what has been taught in past lessons. You will take away with you some practical ideas to use with your pupils in a variety of subject areas.

Write Inspired: unlock purposeful meaningful writing in your school - Philip Davis

Write Inspired aims to reignite a love of words and make writing enjoyable, engaging and meaningful. Empowering young minds to express themselves with confidence and joy.

This highly practical and thought provoking session includes :

- Ideas : how to find them and develop them
- Using sound as an inspirational resource
- The nature of imagination
- Developing a positive, energised writing environment in the classroom
- Encouraging the reluctant writer

Developing challenge for all in mathematics - Rob Lightfoot

In this session with NACE CEO Rob Lightfoot, delegates will:

- Consider what we mean by challenge in mathematics
- Explore tasks that promote cognitive challenge
- Develop our ability to support children to a higher level of thinking in mathematics



Seminar Session 2

Unlocking learning potential: The importance of neuromotor development in early education – Elizabeth Cordle

Neuromotor development influences a child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities. This session explores education from a developmental perspective, highlighting the importance of motor milestones, the consequences of immature motor skills, and how maturing essential movement skills can enhance school readiness and break down barriers to learning. While immature motor skills can affect all children, the impact is often more significant for those with SEND. We will examine the research underpinning these issues and discuss inclusive, evidence-based solutions to help all children reach their full potential in the classroom and beyond. The session aims to help you understand:

- What essential movement skills are
- The impact of immature motor skills on a child's readiness to learn
- How we can support children in overcoming barriers to learning

Dys- what? - Rebecca Enock

This session is a practical and insightful session exploring the spectrum of “dys-” learning differences - including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and other related profiles. This session will equip educators with a deeper understanding of how these differences present in the classroom, what early indicators to look for, and how to create supportive, inclusive learning environments. Through real examples, reflective activities, and a focus on learner perspective, Rebecca will guide participants into the mindset of pupils who think and learn differently. Attendees will leave with strategies to adapt teaching, reduce barriers, and build confidence and independence in neurodiverse learners.

Deep Work: rediscovering the lost arts of focus and concentration - Colin MacIntosh

You attending this seminar could be the most significant 45 minutes of your pupils' learning journey! There has been a serious and measurable decline in focus and attention amongst children and adults over the last fifteen years. So serious, in fact, that it has been described as a 'cognitive death-spiral'. As a consequence, the ability to perform 'Deep Work' - completing tasks that require sustained concentration - is becoming increasingly rare and for many is disappearing all together. That's the bad news.

The good news is that those who can cultivate this skill and make it a central part of their working and learning lives will thrive. In this seminar we will look at the causes of the decline of Deep Work and then look at ways that we can fight back for the next generation of children, as we make their topics and their tasks deeper.



Seminar Session 3

Teaching difficult histories to young people through objects - Debbie Moss

Explore how educators at the National Holocaust Museum teach difficult topics to KS2 students. Our educator will outline the pedagogy behind using objects to support students learning about about difficult histories. Our educator will give you advice and support on how to answer the difficult questions and support you in teaching periods of history in an age appropriate way. There will be an opportunity to ask plenty of questions!

Relationships enable resilience: Building the foundations for regulation, adaptability, and lifelong learning - Naomi Ashman

The most critical skill for our pupils' future success isn't purely academic; it's relational. Relational practice isn't 'fluffy'; it is the neurological prerequisite for academic excellence and future employability. Essential executive function skills, like planning, flexibility, and impulse control, are developmentally dependent on secure attachment. If a child cannot regulate, they cannot collaborate, innovate, or resolve conflict. Through understanding our own nervous systems, we will consider how educators - the most valuable resource in any school - can become a 'safe base.' Together, we will explore how to wire children's brains for success and foster psychological safety, without burning out.

Write Inspired: unlock purposeful meaningful writing in your school - Philip Davis

Write Inspired aims to reignite a love of words and make writing enjoyable, engaging and meaningful. Empowering young minds to express themselves with confidence and joy.

This highly practical and thought provoking session includes :

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- Using sound as an inspirational resource
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- Developing a positive, energised writing environment in the classroom
- Encouraging the reluctant writer



Seminar Session 3

From Vision to Classroom: Designing a Future-Ready Curriculum - Nisha Kaura

What does an exciting, coherent and future-ready curriculum look like across an entire school? As children grow up in an increasingly AI-shaped world, schools have a vital role in developing the human capabilities that matter most: curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, ethical understanding and collaboration.

This session explores practical approaches to curriculum design, with a focus on inquiry-based learning, future-ready skills and rich learning experiences that connect knowledge, values and real-world thinking. Nisha will draw on experience authoring the Human Intelligence curriculum at The Abbey School and developing the Empower Curriculum at Queen's College London, where she will share principles and practical strategies for building a curriculum that is intellectually ambitious, developmentally coherent and engaging for both pupils and teachers. This session will be for those interested in curriculum innovation, inquiry-driven learning and preparing pupils to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Unlocking calm and confidence - Jenny Wannberg-James

Jenny's work centres on making learning calmer, more accessible and sustainable for every child, and she remains fully committed as a full-time teacher.

In this session, Jenny will be sharing an insight into some of the material she uses with my pupils, but also tried and tested (and successful!) tips and tricks which you can easily weave into a busy school day without it having to be on the actual timetable.

Careers and future skills in a Prep school - Connie Watts

This session will explore what meaningful careers provision can look like within a prep school setting. It will consider whether a focus on "future skills" may be more appropriate for younger pupils, and how schools can begin developing awareness of the wider world of work from an early age. The session will also look at how to create a cohesive programme that runs from EYFS through to Year 8, while keeping in mind the transition to Year 9 and beyond. Finally, we will discuss practical strategies for securing buy-in from key stakeholders and embedding careers and future skills provision across the school.



