

Educators' Trust Awards 2024



The Educators' Trust Awards 2024

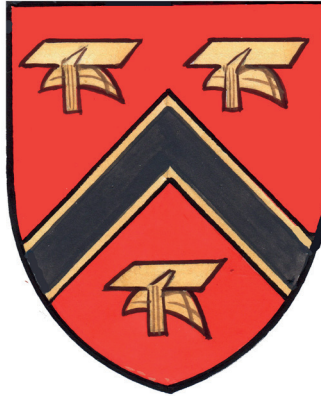


THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF EDUCATORS

*The Educators' Trust is incorporated under
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as Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1179353.*

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The Educators' Trust



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FOREWORD

by

Janet Reynolds

Master of the Worshipful Company of Educators



As Master of the Worshipful Company of Educators, it is my pleasure to host our Annual Awards Dinner this evening.

Charitable giving is one of the pillars of the Livery and our charity trust is an integral part of this Company. Managed by an independent board of trustees, it continues in its dedicated support of the profession of educator and all those professionals who contribute to the enrichment of life, through education.

Our awards tonight celebrate the achievements of some remarkable and inspiring educational practitioners: in school leadership, in art & design, in theatre and performing arts, and in environmental education. We also celebrate those who are not themselves professional educators, but who voluntarily contribute to the educational richness of our learners.

Our main category of awards go to those who are addressing the issue of mental health in education. Unfortunately, poor emotional well-being and mental health disorders are common barriers to enrichment. The consequences of failing to address childhood and adolescent mental health conditions extend to adulthood, impairing both physical and mental health and limiting opportunities in later life.

And misery and alienation are contagious. They affect not only the afflicted, but also those around them. Friends, parents and carers are often ill-equipped to help and so they too are left to feel they are

failing. We know that prevention is better than cure, but we must also recognise that early diagnosis, intervention and treatment are also a vital part of curative, or management, processes.

Tonight's award winners have all adopted a proactive approach to educational challenges. Through the curriculum and through carefully crafted projects and programmes, they are working to make life better for children, young people and the adults who support them.

Our thanks to them for what they do and for their commitment to it. They are striving to make the world a kinder, more accepting and more optimistic place in which to learn and my personal congratulations go to each and every one of them.

Awards Programme

The overarching aim of the charitable activities funded by the Educators' Trust is '*to promote the development of the profession of educator*'. The main way we pursue this aim is to provide awards to individual educators, celebrating outstanding innovation and excellence in educational practice. The awards reflect the unique character of the Worshipful Company of Educators in that they include all levels of education and all settings in which learning takes place. Our choice of the term 'educator' is also deliberately inclusive, to cover all those professionals who contribute to creating a stimulating, diverse and supportive environment in which people learn and enrich their lives.

The Trust is able to make awards to these inspirational individuals because of the generosity of Liverymen, Freemen and other individuals and organisations who share our values and aspirations for the profession of educator.

Thirteen of these awards will be presented this evening:

- **The Master's Award for Outstanding School Leadership**
- **The Trust Award for Art & Design Education**
- **The Mary Lou Carrington Award for a Businesswoman with a significant contribution to education**
- **The Keith Hutton Award for Theatre and Performing Arts Education**
- **The Robert J Jones Award for Environmental Education**
- **The *Inspirational Educator Trust Awards* to eight impressive and inspirational educators working in the field of study chosen every year by the Trustees. This year the theme is *Mental Health in Education*.**

In addition, the Trust has a joint bursary scheme with City and Guilds to support professional development for peer mentoring in prisons, generously supported by Past Master, Susan Fey and Past Master, Peter Warren.

The Trust also funds *The Franklin Grants for Professional Development*, named in honour of the Founding Master of the Company, Professor Raoul Franklin CBE, whose generous legacy has substantially enhanced the value of the Trust Fund. These grants are open to individual educator applicants of any subject or level of education, whether full-time, part-time or freelance practitioner.

The Worshipful Company itself sponsors seven awards for military education in celebration of the links the Company has with each of the armed forces. These are presented at the City Celebration Dinner in the Autumn.



The Judges: The Trust is grateful for the expertise, time and diligence of its award judges: Dr Susan Cousin, Prof David Skidmore, Peter Williams CBE, Dr Anne-Marie Brennan, Prof Martin Collins, Annie Eggar, and Specialist Advisers Professor Matt Fossey and Tony Willenbruch.

Guest Speaker

Our Guest Speaker this evening is Professor Sandeep Ranote, an expert on Mental Health in Education, the theme of the Inspirational Educator Awards this year.

Professor Ranote is Medical Director and Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. She is also the Executive Medical Lead for Mental Health at Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership.

Sandeep is deeply committed to the promotion of mental health and well-being among children and young people. She leads the Mentally Healthy Schools Programme in Greater Manchester and the University Mental Health Service for all four Greater Manchester universities. She is a Visiting Professor in Mental Health at The University of Salford. In 2015 she served on the ministerial task force, Future in Mind.



Sandeep is a member of the national clinical advisory board for Kooth, one of the UK's leading digital mental health organisations, and clinical advisor to The National Children's Museum, Eureka. An expert on eating disorders, she is on the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Eating Disorder Executive Committee, is a trustee for the national eating disorder charity BEAT and is a regular expert media contributor on the subject. Her published research includes perinatal neuroimaging, eating disorders and medical skin camouflage for self-harm, and most recently the impact of Covid-19 on young people.



1. The Master Educator's Award

Winner: Prince Gennuh

Nominator: The Master Educator, Janet Reynolds

The City of London Academies Trust (COLA) is a group of 10 schools brought together in a multi-academy trust by the City of London Corporation to 'prepare people to flourish in the rapidly changing world through exceptional education, cultural and creative learning and skills which link to the world of work'. Prince Gennuh was appointed as Principal of the City of London Academy at Highgate Hill in 2018.

Prince Gennuh was born and educated in Ghana and began teaching there. He came to the UK to study for a Masters in Business Administration 20 years ago and took on a supply maths teacher post in Islington Green to supplement his income. He has described this experience as a baptism of fire. Being used to very strict codes of student behaviour in Ghana, he was unprepared for the more 'laissez-faire' attitude he found in London classrooms. Despite these unexpected challenges, driven by his passion to positively impact the lives of children in the UK, he stuck to his chosen vocation and to his vision of the need for structure and discipline for effective learning.

For the next 16 years, Prince Gennuh taught maths across north London, becoming known for his energetic and innovative teaching. Realising that the general resistance to maths among many students had less to do with an aptitude for the subject and more about perceptions of the subject and the standard way in which it was taught, he devised techniques for making the subject more interesting, one of which was to borrow from boxing- 'BOXMATICS'. For example, students stood up to answer questions on percentages, punching out invisible decimal points to the sky.

Prince began taking on strategic leadership roles in Achievement, Safeguarding, Teaching and Learning and Curriculum. He was appointed Head of Mathematics Department at The City of London



Academy in Hackney in 2009 where he set up an outstanding mathematics department. He was later appointed Assistant Principal responsible for achievement across the school. In four consecutive years, Hackney COLA was in the top one per cent of schools in the country in terms of students' progress.

His proven track record for improving students' outcomes and developing effective school improvement policies, including for behaviour and attendance, led to his appointment as Principal at COLA at Highgate Hill, Archway, in 2018. Prince's framework of policies and practice for a well-ordered, highly focused school is supplemented by a whole-school approach to student and staff mental health and wellbeing, with a diversity of interventions including a Well-being Hub, a Foundation Peer Project, the One Kind Word Initiative, and Gratitude Projects, as well as specialist support from the Anna Freud Charity. COLA Highgate Hill earned recognition as a 'healthy school'. This accolade is a result of the academy's dedication to supporting the health and well-being of its students.

Prince's ambitions for the school are high. A new Sixth Form Centre was launched in September 2022 with the aim to get as many students from disadvantaged backgrounds into Russell Group universities and the Ivy League in the United States. Sixth Form students receive bespoke subject workshops, expert-run application sessions and interview preparation, as well as cultural capital programmes and work experience at international firms. Several students have been successful in receiving offers from Oxbridge to study in a range of courses.



2. The Trust Award for Art & Design Education

Winner: Chris Follows

Nominator: Samantha Elliott, Associate Dean, Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Colleges, University of the Arts London

Sir Grayson Perry, celebrated British artist and Chancellor of UAL, referred to the university as “the world’s biggest factory for making trouble” and it has produced a significant number of artists, designers and technologists who have challenged the conventional art world. It is an internationally renowned university for the arts, made up of six colleges and more than 19,000 students from across the globe.

Chris Follows is the Emerging Technologies Manager working with students across the colleges. He was born in Stafford, West Midlands. His father, a professional cartoonist, had a significant influence on him. He dreamed of pursuing an art career, but this wasn’t an option initially. Instead, Chris studied and worked as a chef for many years. In his final chef position, he regularly cooked at No.10 for the UK Prime Minister and at St James’s Palace for Prince Charles. The long and challenging transition from cooking to art culminated in a Fine Art Painting Degree from the Wimbledon School of Art in 2000.

Chris has been at the forefront of championing the awareness and integration of emerging technologies in creative tech practice and arts education. His one-year ‘SCORE’ Fellowship award at the OU Support Centre for Open Resources in Education, enabled him to deepen his research in communities of practice, digital literacies, open education and digital innovation. The SCORE Fellowship Project aimed to explore relationships between traditional arts practice and open educational resource (OER) practice, including the use and reuse of OER, best practice, OER communities, inter-college collaborations and the development of an open Arts-UK OER community of practice.

Chris’s post at UAL involves working collaboratively across the university to make access to these technologies inclusive and accessible. He uses his networks and connections from industry to

support situated learning activities which provide opportunities for students to develop professional skills and networks.

His teaching methods are dynamic and responsive to student interests and aptitudes. He adapted an informal student-led research and development (R&D) model to support a formal academic-led curriculum. He built on student independent experimentation with digital technology to establish small groups and digital-making events where students could exchange ideas and get help to navigate the tech world together. Chris was invited by the Tate Gallery to be a Tate Exchange Founding Associate, for which he established a formal creative tech R&D group, *The Digital Maker Collective* (DMC), formed of staff, students and alumni. The DMC has delivered high-profile events at national arts institutions such as Tate Modern and the British Film Institute and at educational tech events engaging thousands of the wider public. Many of Chris's students, members of the DMC, have gone on to become leading innovators and change makers in the tech industries. His impact on student futures cannot be overestimated.

Chris's work was central in UAL winning a large EU-funded project, *Accelerate: Accessible Immersive Learning for Art and Design Project*.

The project brought together art and design lecturers, educational researchers, and learning technologists from the UK, Ireland, Poland, and Ukraine to reflect on the impact of COVID-19 on higher education teaching and to explore new possibilities for pedagogy and digital innovation.



Photo credit: Kristina Sarkisyan



3. The Mary Lou Carrington Award for a Businesswoman with a Significant Contribution to Education

Winner: Nicola Williams

Nominator: Lily Clifford, Head of Inspiration, Speakers for Schools

Mary Lou Carrington was a businesswoman and a Common Councillor in the City of London with a passionate commitment to education. A founding member of the Educators, she sadly died in 2008. This award is in her memory.

Speakers for Schools (SfS) is a charity founded in 2011 by the broadcaster, Robert Peston. It provides leading industry professionals and academics to speak, free of charge, to students in state schools, to share their knowledge, insights and experience and to inspire and motivate them.

Nicola Williams is Committee Chair at the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, the UK's only chartered professional body dedicated to educating, developing and regulating actuaries based both in the UK and internationally. She is also a Crown Court judge.

She had a very successful career at the bar as a criminal lawyer at a time when women and black people in the legal profession were few and far between. She was a legal commentator on the O.J. Simpson trial verdict, she served as an ombudsman, including as a commissioner at the Independent Police Complaints Commission and as the Complaints Commissioner of the Cayman Islands. She was the first Service Complaints Ombudsman for the UK Armed Forces.

Having grown up in South London of Guyanese parentage, Nicola is keen to give back to the community there and in particular to inspire young women to consider a career in the legal sector. Nicola often speaks to large audiences about the law as a profession. In her work with Speakers for Schools she not only advises on the law as a profession, but also tells young people about her own career journey, the challenges she faced and how she overcame them. She gives

youngsters an insight into her achievements and offers them top life lessons that she learned along the way and how they can use them in their own lives.

The feedback from her school audiences includes, 'Nicola is an incredible woman and has shown us what great rewards can come your way if you have the right work ethic.'

Her other voluntary work includes being a trustee for Bridge Support, an organisation that provides mental health support tailored to individual needs, from community visits to services provided in its housing facilities.

In addition to her other roles, Nicola is Chair of the Independent Complaints Panel for the Portman Group, the regulatory body for alcohol in the UK, co-Chair of the EDI Forum for the Association of Chief Executives, an accredited mediator at the London School of Mediation and a lay member of Council at the University of Kent. She is the author of the legal thrillers, *Without Prejudice* and *Until Proven Innocent*.



Nicola is a winner of the Cosmopolitan Woman of Achievement Award and was listed as one of the 100 most influential black people in the UK.



4. Keith Hutton Award in Theatre and Performing Arts Education

Winner: Beru Tessema

Nominator: Lucy Skilbeck, Director of Actor Training, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) is recognised worldwide as the foremost higher education institution for the training of actors, stage managers, designers and technical stagecraft specialists. Central to its mission is the principle of professional practitioners teaching the next generation of professional practitioners in a staff-student ratio enabling close tuition and individualised learning. RADA has trained and developed some of the best actors and theatre production professionals in the world.

Beru Tesema is home grown. Of Ethiopian-British descent, he is a graduate of RADA's BA Acting, followed by an MA in Screenwriting from the London Film School. He is sought after as an actor, a playwright, and a film-maker. He was appointed as a teacher at RADA in 2018 where his professional experience is invaluable in developing the students' skills in acting for stage and screen as well as writing and directing short films, some of which have won awards at national and international film festivals.

This bridging of professional practice and teaching inspires students. He models the technical craft and the professional self-motivation that such a career entails. Beru works with all year groups, as an acting and screen-acting teacher, project leader and director. In doing so, he embodies the dynamic intersection of skills, the qualities of listening and responding in different mediums, and the collaboration between actor, teacher and director.

Beru creates an inclusive and equitable teaching environment. He is process-led and helps students develop a learning orientation through positive feedback, reflective opportunities, regular check-ins, and shared experience as a RADA graduate.

As director of third year films, Beru collaborates with the students as professionals, while guiding them to integrate all elements of their acting training. As a teacher, collaborator and director, Beru uniquely supports them in this process. Many of the graduates make their early careers in film and television and some also choose to continue to explore screen work as writers and film-makers. Beru's inspiring and innovative teaching undoubtedly contributes to student success.

It is entirely in keeping with Beru's continual desire to innovate that he has decided to use his award to research contemporary dance, so as to expand his knowledge of another performance medium and integrate this into a film project.

In the view of the judges:

"Tessama is clearly an inspirational teacher and mentor, gathering plaudits from both students and colleagues. In particular, his all-round professional activities as actor, writer, director and producer in both theatre and cinema have brought to his teaching work an authenticity and depth of experience which is unusual and intensely valuable for his students."





5. The Robert J Jones Award for Environmental Education

Winner: Matthew Rose

Nominators: Dr Melissa Glackin and Shirin Hine, Kings College, London

Matthew Rose is the Education and Engagement Officer at Holland Park Ecology Centre, London. He is a Londoner who has always had a passion for wildlife and the outdoors, and in Holland Park is able to help urban children and young people discover both the wonder of nature and its importance.

Matthew was a key player in the design and development of the purpose-built Ecology Centre, which provides outdoor and indoor spaces, including an edible teaching garden, a securely fenced woodland and a vast range of live and static wildlife specimens.

Due to the length of his term at the Ecology Centre, Matthew has acted as a reassuring, constant member of the local community, supporting young people, their siblings, and their families, during multiple visits over their educational careers. He has taught thousands of students over the years, covering topics including minibeast hunts, pond dipping, and tree studies. He successfully uses a range of approaches: he is a wonderful storyteller, with an extensive knowledge of wildlife, and is able to weave challenging ecological information into fun and thought-provoking pedagogical practice.

Through carefully explaining ecosystems within the site and the effects of human activity on these, he offers learners a greater understanding of – and encourages respect for – their local environment and other species within it. Matthew works tirelessly to ensure that nature-based learning can be accessed by all, particularly by those who may not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with local outdoor spaces.



Matthew has also been very successful in securing additional funds by writing funding applications. For example, he recently secured funding to support the ongoing 'Nature Champions Holiday Activities and Food' programme which offered subsidised outdoor exploration workshops, enabling participants to connect with nature through the use of all their senses, including poetry and art.

During the Pandemic, Matthew and colleagues worked to support home learning and nature connection by developing a creative set of downloadable activity sheets that offered step-by-step guides and resources. Further, Matthew supports new and experienced teachers to use the outdoors through annually hosting MA STEM education students, from King's College London. Building on this relationship, he recently contributed a chapter and illustration to an essay collection authored by King's students, by offering his reflections from a practitioner's viewpoint.

Trainee, experienced teachers and academic colleagues alike consider Matthew an exceptional, knowledgeable and professional environmental educator, who has offered his community an inspirational personable service, provided with care and humility.



6. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Jennifer Carney

Nominator: Maarten Crommelin, Head Teacher, Maudsley and Bethlem Hospital School

Jennifer Carney is a teacher at Maudsley and Bethlem Hospital School, which serves 200 children in need of psychiatric care across six wards with 23 teaching and support staff. It has an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating.

Jennifer was nominated for her outstanding adaptability and creativity in responding to the needs of the pupils. Although qualified as a primary teacher, she completed a CPD programme to diversify into secondary English, Geography, and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), to meet the needs of the age cohort.

Two anecdotes highlight the degree of differentiation and rigour of Jennifer's teaching practice and the range and scope of her work. The first involved a pupil diagnosed with significant global developmental delay, unable to perform even the most basic literacy tasks. Jennifer created a series of resources using 'Widgits' (pictorial word representations) to aid in the acquisition of language. Using these the pupil was quickly able to start writing simple sentences and recently sat an Entry 1 functional skills assessment in English. Jen followed this success with whole-school training on the use of Widgits and demonstrated how they could be used in other subject areas. The second anecdote was her determination to enable a pupil who, after a prolonged period of disengagement, decided to sit four GCSEs with seven months of teaching time available. Jennifer aligned herself with the pupil's ambitions and taught an intensified Geography syllabus, including organising an off-site field trip so the pupil could meet the needs of the specification. The pupil achieved a grade 8 in this subject.

Another important part of the School's work is preparing and supporting pupils' reintegration to their home schools where possible.

Jennifer is key to this task. Her excellent communication skills have ensured that she works successfully with other professionals across multiple agencies to plan intricate reintegrations for young people, many of whom will have been out of school for some time. These sometimes begin online. There have been extreme examples of children who refuse camera and sound. With Jennifer's gentle guidance and encouragement such pupils gradually developed the confidence to speak and make their own wishes known, and finally to be seen on the camera - the first step to returning to their own schools and communities.



Jennifer's significant contributions to the well-being, not only of the pupils but also of her colleagues, are acknowledged by the School and celebrated in this award tonight.



7. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Lakshmi Divakarla

Nominator: Clare Broadhurst, Learning & Development Specialist, Minds Ahead & Jen Donnelly, Well-being Lead, Francis Askew Primary School.

Minds Ahead is a social enterprise company that designs and delivers mental health qualifications, bespoke training, and strategic consultancy and support to schools, multi-academy trusts, local authorities and other organisations. *Minds Ahead's* approach to school mental health is about schools taking a whole-school approach that is holistic, strategic, preventive, proactive and reflective. Together *Minds Ahead* and Leeds Beckett University have established the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health, dedicated to strengthening mental health in schools and colleges across the country.

Lakshmi Divakarla is the Emotional Literacy Support Teaching Assistant at Francis Askew Primary School in Hull, but her colleagues consider that she consistently goes above and beyond the expectations of her formal role. She is forward-thinking and astute at noticing the mental health and well-being needs of children and suggesting interventions to the Senior Leadership team.

Nothing is too much effort for her. She learnt Spanish so she could effectively communicate with a group of Spanish-speaking pupils. Lakshmi wanted the children to feel that they belonged, were cared for and had a voice in the school. She translated books into Spanish for them and supported them to develop an emotional vocabulary so they could express how they were feeling and develop friendships with their English-speaking peers. This group of students became more engaged during lesson times, with one of them achieving the highest Year 6 SAT score for maths.

Lakshmi built on this experience to note more generally children who had difficulty in verbally expressing their emotions. So she encouraged the use of drawing to journal their feelings. Class

teachers have noted that the children involved are more self-regulated and engage better with their learning. She also observed that some children find break times difficult and so began a routine of regular check-ins with them. She is very well known throughout the school and children speak very highly of her.

In order to deepen her knowledge of mental health, she has undertaken extensive training and CPD to enhance her effectiveness and so has a good grounding in contemporary progressive practice. She enrolled on an MA Mental Health Specialist. She has shared her learning with her colleagues and together they have implemented some of the innovative approaches learned. Lakshmi is also a Well-Being Champion for staff.



Lakshmi was invited to give a talk at the 2023 Festival of Education and has been a reviewer for the Centre of Education and Youth, exploring the state of play for mental health training and development for school staff. Her enthusiasm for this area of work extends beyond her own school to the wider educational community.



8. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Amber Duxbury

Nominator: Jo Graham, Learning & Development Programme Lead, Minds Ahead

Minds Ahead is a social enterprise company that designs and delivers mental health qualifications, bespoke training, and strategic consultancy and support to schools, multi-academy trusts, local authorities and other organisations. *Minds Ahead's* approach to school mental health is about schools taking a whole-school approach that is holistic, strategic, preventive, proactive and reflective. Together *Minds Ahead* and Leeds Beckett University have established the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health, dedicated to strengthening mental health in schools and colleges across the country.

Amber is a PE Teacher, who has undertaken extensive CPD and an MA in School Leadership of Mental Health and Wellbeing to become Designated Mental Health Lead and the Guidance Coach at The Island Free School in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight. Ventnor is a socio-economically deprived area, the Isle of Wight also has the lowest GCSE attainment data for England, and suffers from very limited, and heavily over-subscribed, mental health services.

Amber has employed the knowledge and skills she has gained from her studies to develop and embed an evidence-based whole-school provision for her school. She created a pupil Mental Health Ambassador programme, integrated Mental Health support into all student planning, designed a Well-being Wall, shared resources with staff to integrate mental health and well-being into the PSHRE curriculum and delivered a programme of relevant assemblies. Collectively this work aims at removing stigma and improving the universal provision. The student Mental Health Ambassadors have undertaken charity work, raising £380 in the last academic year for local mental health charities, and creating assemblies for days such as World Mental Health Day to reduce stigma within school.

She has used the understanding she gained of mental health

services to build a strong working relationship with her new local Mental Health Support Team. Together they have removed barriers to accessing services and created innovative solutions to local difficulties enabling more children and young people to access targeted and specialist support. The close partnership has led to bespoke training for students on areas Amber was able to identify as high need. Amber is now working with the Mental Health Support Team to develop the role of the Student Mental Health Ambassadors further to support student transition from primary school. In her role as Guidance Coach, Amber sees students who need individualised support regularly. 62% of the students seen in the last academic year had increased attendance following the start of this intervention.

Amber has also led whole-school training, from the Senior Leadership Team to classroom teachers and support staff, working closely with Designated Safeguarding Leads. She has provided resources to support colleagues to identify how anxiety, low mood, abuse and self-harm may present, how and when to discuss these areas, and how to provide a safe environment for students.



The mental health of staff also gets Amber's attention. As well as support sessions for coping with stress, Amber also runs High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) and dance classes for staff and organizes regular staff nights out together for well-being. Amber's enthusiastic commitment to improving the social, emotional, mental health and well-being of students and staff is undoubted.



9. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Adam Gillett

Nominator: Denise Kindle, Director, Minds Ahead

Minds Ahead is a social enterprise company that designs and delivers mental health qualifications, bespoke training, and strategic consultancy and support to schools, multi-academy trusts, local authorities and other organisations. *Minds Ahead's* approach to school mental health is about schools taking a whole-school approach that is holistic, strategic, preventive, proactive and reflective. Together *Minds Ahead* and Leeds Beckett University have established the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health, dedicated to strengthening mental health in schools and colleges across the country.

Adam Gillett is an unusual breed of educator, crossing the bridge between schools and universities, making productive links between theory and practice. Adam works one day a week at Leeds Beckett University teaching on the MA in School Leadership in Mental Health, delivered in partnership with Minds Ahead. He has also designed a pioneering peer-mentoring qualification, accredited by the Royal Society of Public Health, to support the mental health and well-being of 14-18-year-olds, and a course aimed at primary school children in partnership with the Children's University. He has also been involved in evaluating training bids submitted nationally to the DfE for Senior Lead in Mental Health training, rolled out across the country.

The other four days Adam is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School. Here he is a driving force behind transformative initiatives that have significantly improved the social, emotional, and mental health support for both students and staff. He's introduced student and staff well-being ambassadors, engaged 27 external agencies, and developed a comprehensive quality assurance system, all of which have contributed to his school being awarded the Gold Award for Mental Health from Leeds Beckett - one of the first secondary schools to achieve this recognition.

Adam has also established links with Sheffield University Medical School securing funding for placing medical students within Penistone Grammar School. This innovative approach enhances the support available to pupils and prepares these future doctors for the mental health needs they will support. This innovative approach to building links is what sets Adam apart. He has also raised nearly £60,000 for Sheffield's Children's Hospital to refurbish their mental health crisis room.



Adam's vision for a wall-to-wall well-being environment includes staff. His bespoke staff well-being package is tailored to the needs of staff members at different stages of their careers. This approach has achieved nationwide recognition of Penistone Grammar School as an institution that prioritises staff well-being. He has developed this into the 'CAGE' approach (Communication, Appreciation, Growth and Empathy). Adam also works with other schools to adopt the CAGE approach and implement the same systems, in particular the QA approach which also benchmarked costs versus impact. These have been adopted by schools across the country. Adam regularly speaks to school network groups and at conferences across the country, including the Festival of Education, sharing the initiatives he's tried and tested to promote positive mental well-being.



10. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Francesca Henry

Nominator: Thomas Goodridge, Assistant Principal, Northampton FE College

Northampton College is a FE college with over 9,000 students. It operates from a main campus on the outskirts of Northampton in a densely-populated, predominantly working-class suburb; a town centre campus with an ESOL offer to support refugees; and a third campus in the rural town of Daventry. The College's support for students has an Ofsted rating of 'Outstanding'. This is delivered by the School of Academic and Vocational Support, which includes a Wellbeing and Mental Health Team of three.

Frankie Henry was appointed to the post of Wellbeing and Mental Health Practitioner in January 2022 to help facilitate the College's ambition to enhance the service to vulnerable students, and the wider 'wraparound' support needs of the general student body. A key focus of this role was to increase the awareness of well-being and mental health in the College, and to raise the aspirations of students, encouraging them to make positive lifestyle choices.

Frankie graduated from Nottingham Trent University with a BA Hons in Health and Social Care where she specialised in counselling, before starting work as a Support Practitioner in a primary school. She has subsequently undertaken substantial professional development in suicide prevention, early trauma and adverse childhood experiences, self-harm and bereavement.

Frankie's strength, passion, and determination to support vulnerable people is driven by her own experience, as a young adult, of family mental illness and bereavement, at a time when there was little support for personal trauma. Frankie is dedicated to ensuring that no young people at Northampton College will be without the support they need. Over the last two years she has transformed the delivery of well-being and mental health support, introducing innovative

strategies and support interventions that have consistently improved outcomes for students.

A key to her success has been her ability to make a sustainable and positive working relationship with the Northamptonshire Mental Health Support Team. Its NHS-funded programme involves its staff regularly attending college to talk to students, sharing resources with Northampton staff and students, delivering workshops and dealing with severe cases referred to them by Frankie.

Frankie was responsible for setting up the Wellbeing and Mental Health hubs at Northampton College – an innovative space that facilitates and provides support - and a dedicated Instagram page and newly created SharePoint site, where students have access to a wide range of resources and the opportunity to participate in activities such as 'Wear it Green Day' and 'Tea and Talk', in celebration of World Mental Health Day.

Frankie currently supports 97 students through weekly one-to-one mentoring and support sessions, equipping them with skills and strategies to overcome personal difficulties, mental health issues and family breakdowns. As a result, students have developed confidence, self-esteem and resilience, as evidenced by very strong retention rates. Achievement rates of 'high needs', EHCP and ALS students are in line with those of the college mainstream total.



Outside college, Frankie works tirelessly with several local mental health charities, including the Samaritans. She is improving the lives of hundreds of young people.



11. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Simon Kessell

Nominator: Joshua Tyers, Head Teacher, Biscovey Academy, Cornwall

Biscovey Academy is a two-form entry junior school of 230 pupils. It is part of a large multi-academy trust, made up of 36 schools across Cornwall. The area suffers chronic economic and social deprivation rates: 56% of pupils live in the most deprived 0-40% of Lower Super Output Areas in England; 49% of pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs; and over 33% carry an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) score higher than three.

Simon Kessell is the Trauma-Informed School Lead. When he was appointed, the school was in the doldrums academically and in terms of student engagement and staff morale, with a persistent absentee figure double the national average and an exclusion rate that was the highest in Cornwall. Holding a Distinction in the Level 5 Diploma in Trauma and Mental Health-Informed Schools and Communities, Simon worked with the head teacher to design a whole-school change based on the principles of trauma-informed practice, emphasizing the importance of rigorous routines and restorative language in a coherent and consistent behaviour support and relationship policy.

Simon trained the staff in the trauma-informed approach, enabling them to imagine what lies beneath problematic behaviour and respond with curiosity and empathy. This strengthens attachment and relationships and ultimately, enables greater mental health. He line-manages other mental health practitioners and comprehensively monitors and tracks the school's emotional journey. He chairs the weekly welfare meetings to assess progress. He delivers one-to-one

therapeutic interventions for children carrying significant trauma and with the safeguarding team leads the school's well-being practice.

In line with the ethos of trauma-informed practice, relationships do not stop with pupils. Parents, families and carers are central to the improvement of mental health. Simon introduced and delivers the SPACE programme (Supporting Parents and Children Emotionally). This enables adults to revisit their own childhood experiences and better understand how they impact on the earliest developmental stages of their children's lives and how better to respond. He has been successful in attracting some of the most hard-to-reach families.



One measure of the impact that Simon's skills, drive and enthusiasm have had on Biscovey Academy is the student outcomes statistics. In the four years since the introduction of the new system, exclusions have dropped dramatically, attendance has risen to above the national average, and persistence absence is well below the national average. Motional Screening Data, an evidence-based measure of emotional health across a school, showed a substantial diminution of rage, fear, panic and grief. A more qualitative measure is one parent's assessment: "Simon's sessions changed my son's life ... It seems like it was the missing piece of the puzzle for him." It is no wonder that Simon has begun delivering talks on whole-school improvement to school leaders across the country.



12. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Jacquelin Valin

Nominator: Portia Kumalo, NHS Consultant, SW London Mental Health Support Teams

Southfields Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in south west London consists of a secondary school with 1300 children, mainly from disadvantaged backgrounds, and a Special School of 150 children with sensory impairment and serious medical conditions. The MAT also has a cluster of 10 local primary schools.

When Jacqueline Valin was appointed as head teacher in 1998, Southfields School had serious weaknesses. By 2007 the student outcomes had improved significantly, and the school had been graded Outstanding by Ofsted. In 2011, the overall quality had improved so significantly that Southfields was named as one of the first National Teaching Schools, and Jackie was recognised as a National Leader of Education (NLE) by the National College. In 2012 she was re-designated as Principal of the wider MAT.

Jacque Valim has 40 years of experience in education and has a proven track record of driving up standards and inspiring aspirations in young people. She strongly believes in the ethos of cradle-to-grave lifelong learning. She put this into practice by situating Southfields at the heart of the community, for which she developed a community arm of the school.

Mental health and well-being were central to this community approach, which involved developing strong sustainable collaborative links with education, social care and NHS health professionals, through her active engagement with the South West London Cluster Leads Forums and the South West London Emotional Wellbeing Steering Group. Jackie has provided system leadership ensuring that the education lens is present in programme development and decision-making.

Working with the Mental Health Support Team in SW London, Jackie

developed whole-school approach policies and intervention activities acknowledged by experts in the field to provide effective support in education settings. Part of this approach is to normalise mental health and emotional well-being, so as to remove any stigma attached to talking about mental health and accessing professional support.

Jackie's initiatives extend beyond her own MAT. She was instrumental in cascading the whole school approach model across south west London and in shaping the emotional well-being in-school programme. This programme was rigorously evaluated by researchers and the most effective aspects were built into staff CPD and rolled out across schools.



Jacqueline also produced the 'Butterflies' book, a resource for schools to effectively tackle mental health and emotional well-being, and to support students and parents who suffer mental ill health. 'Butterflies' is now used across London through the Reconnect London Network. It is the go-to manual to support schools, linking Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) behaviour, non-attendance, with mental health provision and effective strategies.

Jacqueline Valin's work on mental health and attendance has been recognised by the Department for Education and she has supported schools across England. She is a regular presenter to schools and local authorities on school leadership and school improvement, as well as on whole-school strategies on mental health and well-being.



13. The Inspirational Educator Awards for Mental Health in Education

Winner: Paula Willis

Nominator: Clare Broadhurst, Learning & Development Specialist, Minds Ahead and David Blackwell, Head Teacher, Springfield Primary School.

Minds Ahead is a social enterprise company that designs and delivers mental health qualifications, bespoke training, and strategic consultancy and support to schools, multi-academy trusts, local authorities and other organisations. *Minds Ahead's* approach to school mental health is about schools taking a whole-school approach that is holistic, strategic, preventive, proactive and reflective. Together *Minds Ahead* and Leeds Beckett University have established the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health, dedicated to strengthening mental health in schools and colleges across the country.

Paula Willis made a remarkable entry into education. She was first employed as a cleaner and mid-day supervisor in 2002 at Springfield Primary School in Derby. Taking employer-based vocational courses, Paula acquired relevant qualifications and in 2006 she secured a post as an education care officer supporting children with dyslexia. She then went on to become a Teaching Assistant and then a Senior Higher-Level Teaching Assistant and part of the Senior Leadership Team. Paula has since graduated with a Post Grad Diploma in School Mental Health Specialist and is the school's Mental Health Lead.

Paula led the consultation and implementation of a new behaviour policy across the school, moving from a behaviourist approach to a relational approach. Towards this, she designed and led staff training in using an Emotion Coaching response focusing on how staff and pupils can develop restorative conversations. This is now embedded into the school's practice. This policy and practice is central to the whole-school approach recommended by experts in the field, ensuring a consistent approach is implemented, embedded, and sustained across the school.



Paula has the well-being of pupils at the centre of everything she does. She uses her knowledge to assess the needs of pupils and works with them to consider an approach that will work for them. She is continually differentiating her approach based on student needs. She has introduced a number of initiatives such as a breakfast club, lunchtime drop-in sessions and regular 'check-ins' for vulnerable pupils, 'Drawing & Talking' sessions for those who

may have suffered trauma and established an after-school Forest School.

The impact of this work is that pupils are now able to express their emotions, have access to individual strategies to support their mental health and wellbeing, interact positively with their peers and engage with their learning.

To support this work, Paula builds strong connections with parents and carers, working collaboratively to ensure their voice is heard and that they can access the support they need. Paula successfully led the school to achieve the Carnegie Centre Mental Health in School Award (Silver Level) and it is believed that her work has supported the school in being oversubscribed.



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