

Speaker Profile

Jill Berry

Jill's teaching career spanned 30 years in maintained and independent schools culminating in the headship of the Dame Alice Harpur School, part of the Harpur Trust. She now advises on headship appointments and is responsible for developing the HTI/National College for Teaching and Leadership online course 'Leading an Independent School'.

Synopsis:

How do you select the right head to lead your school in the future?

Leading an independent school requires specific skills and attributes. The pool of talent is not infinite. Finding the right head is fundamental to success, so how are leaders of the future developed and what special talents do they need? We will consider new research that will be of interest to heads, deputies and governors.

Justin Urquhart-Stewart,

Head of Corporate Development and co-founder of Seven Investment Management, Justin has also become one of the most recognisable and trusted market commentators. With twenty years' experience following the ups and downs of the markets, his assessments, predictions and witty observations guide investors, professionals and amateurs alike. After training as a barrister, Justin took up corporate finance in Africa and Singapore. He then moved into marketing with a focus on cash management facilities. This led him to help found Broker Services, which became Barclays Stockbrokers where he served as Corporate Development Director. He has a keen interest in developing the investment market and breaking down many of the traditional barriers for both private investors and smaller companies. He was named Favourite Financial Personality by Proshare, writes regularly for national magazines and newspapers and is a frequent expert commentator on television and radio.

Synopsis:

The Global Economy – Is it in recovery or remission and how will this impact on independent schools?

Six years after the financial explosion the global economy has been growing, but supported by huge amounts of government support and stimulants. But have we resolved the underlying problems or have we just papered over them for the time being?

The building blocks of portfolio management. A workshop for governors and bursars on how to manage their portfolio.

Richard Palmer

Richard is currently Vice-Chairman of The Society of Heads and is also one of their representatives on the Board of The Independent Schools Council. He is a registered inspector with the Independent School Inspectorate and has been Head of St Christopher

School in Letchworth Garden City for nearly eight years. St Christopher has a long tradition of encouraging Pupil Voice and is run in an open and democratic way with whole school meetings able to propose significant changes to the school's policies and procedures.

Synopsis:

What is it that children really want from their school, and what are they likely to want in future?

As far as we know there has never been a pupil survey asking them what they want from their school. We present new research of almost 5,000 pupils in independent schools.

Charles Robinson and Peter Bodkin

Development Director, Independent Schools Partnership. Charles has a varied business background but started his career as a submarine navigator. He also had roles in PwC and Capita. In 1994, with his wife and partners, he co-founded Kingscourt School in the UK, grew it and sold it to Cognita in 2006. He was then Business Development Director at Cognita, a private equity-backed schools group for five years. During this time he originated and completed acquisitions and developed a strong network of relationships with private school owners. Charles is now one of the founder directors of the International Schools Partnership (ISP). ISP is building a group of about 50 international schools in four regions of the world. He has an MBA from Cranfield and a Mathematics and Engineering Degree from Reading University.

Peter Bodkin.

General Secretary, The Society of Heads, which represents the heads of just over 100 well-established Independent schools. After graduating from St Andrews University, Peter taught Biology at Bradfield where he was also a Housemaster. He was appointed as Head of Tettenhall College in 1994. During his headship at Tettenhall, he served as the Honorary Treasurer of the Society and was Chairman in 2007. He became the General Secretary in September 2010

Synopsis:

Why is independent education such an attractive proposition for investors?

Many schools have opened in the past five years, despite the recession. Recently activity has increased, so just why are investors rushing to open schools and establish new groups? Charles has extensive experience of buying and establishing new schools and groups. He will outline why running independent schools continues to be such an attractive business proposition.

Holly Christie,

Communications and Marketing Manager, Park Hill School. In her eight years at Park Hill,

Holly has moved from early years teaching to IT and marketing. Her role now is communications and everything that entails. She set up a digital marketing plan with the aid of her husband, who specialises in social media for businesses, which has been a great success with the families at school.

Synopsis:

The benefits of using social media in your marketing strategy.

Holly talked on the benefits, risks and opportunities of employing social media within school marketing strategy. This covered practical themes such as reputation management, arguments for and against engaging in social media, returns on investment and the capabilities needed for the effective use of social media.

Gavin Clucas, Sales Director, Design & Management Systems, an information technology company specialising in providing IP networks and associated services to businesses, schools and colleges. Gavin has over 20 years' experience in IT sales and account management, specialising in the education sector. He joined DMS from Akhter Computers in 2009 and brings a wealth of knowledge of Microsoft licensing and project management as well as an experienced listening ear to network managers in schools and colleges, helping them to understand and serve their IT requirements

Synopsis:

How do you create a future-proof IT strategy?

There are plenty of examples of big companies and government departments making the wrong decisions about information technology. Independent schools invest a great deal in IT. The spend is set to increase, so just how do you make the right decisions to provide the IT to run the school as an effective business?

Sam Macdonald

Partner, Farrer & Co. Sam advises schools and other educational institutions on constitutional and governance matters, on corporate transactions and on related tax issues. He regularly deals with Government agencies on behalf of schools on a range of compliance issues, from public benefit to the establishment of academies. In 2011, he led the legal team advising the ISC on its successful judicial review of the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. Sam served as a governor of a major boys' boarding school for ten years and is now a governor of a co-educational prep school.

Synopsis:

Compliance issues when embarking on major structural change

Some schools have been forced to reconfigure in order to compete effectively while others have taken the economic downturn as an opportunity to gain market share. Sam

Macdonald will cover compliance issues when embarking on major structural change such as mergers, the establishment of groups of schools, and overseas franchises.

Mark Mackenzie Crooks

Business Director at St Helen's School, Northwood. Mark was appointed as the Business Director (another name for a bursar!) at St Helen's School in January 2013. Like all Bursars, he is responsible for everything from repairing the staffroom coffee machine to developing the School's multi-£m estates master plan and everything in between. St Helen's is undergoing a period of considerable change and he has been at the heart of developing the new vision and strategy for the school. Prior to taking up his role at St Helen's, Mark completed a two-year MBA at Cranfield University and enjoyed a 19-year career in the Army. He was privileged to lead organisations from 5 to 500 in various interesting places around the world and he spent considerable time juggling resources in the MOD's procurement organisation.

Synopsis:

How to reposition your school in the market to enhance demand

Mark presented a case study demonstrating how it's done in a top girls school, and how to communicate a vision for the future.

Anthony Misquitta,

Partner, Farrer & Co. Anthony is a partner at Farrer & Co solicitors specialising in intellectual property (IP), software contracts and IP litigation. In recent years he has developed an expertise in schools overseas licensing and has been involved with all of Farrer & Co's overseas schools projects.

Synopsis:

Are you using your brand name effectively?

The sector has some very powerful brand names, which in many cases are much under used. Anthony will give advice on exploiting a school's name, trade mark protection, and intellectual property issues.

