

## 39<sup>th</sup> COBIS Annual Conference – Session Descriptions

### *Opportunity and Challenge: Leading in a Climate of Change*

**Monday 10 May 2021**

**Breakout Sessions – 10.00-11.00 BST**

#### ***Safeguarding with Cultural Sensitivities***

**Alison Peterson, Headteacher, and Tracey Francis, Head of Pre-Prep and DSL, The English School Kuwait**

As recent winners of the International School Award for their Safeguarding Initiative, TES will share their successful journey to overcome safeguarding challenges to educate their community.

#### ***Equitable Education for All: Ensuring an Inclusive Culture in your School and Beyond***

**Professor Adam Boddison, CEO, and Kamal Bodhanker, Head of International Development, nasen**

In this session, Adam and Kamal will consider how International School leaders can develop effective strategic practice to ensure an inclusive culture in their schools. Adam and Kamal will discuss COBIS expectations in relation to inclusion as well as how provision can be strategically monitored and reviewed in practice. The role of International Schools in the achievement of SDG4 will also be explored and by the end of the session attendees will be well placed to align their SEND provision with COBIS expectations and further develop effective SEND leadership in their own contexts.

#### ***Pupil Parliament is Just the Beginning: Developing a Systematic Approach to Support Pupils to Shape Their Environment***

**Paul Seedhouse, Curriculum Consultant, British Schools Foundation**

One of our most important jobs as school leaders is to nurture the ability of pupils to make decisions. Despite this, young people seldom have the opportunity to make significant choices in their school life and those choices tend to be limited and rarely of a fundamental nature. If we can empower pupils to establish a voice of substance, to take occasional well considered risks and make some decisions that shape their environment, it will be in everyone's interest.

#### ***Governing for High Performance***

**Simon O'Grady, CEO, High Performance Learning**

Drawing upon illustrations from a range of successful schools, the session focuses on the characteristics of effective governance in high performing organisations. Aimed at senior leaders and governors, the session explores what governors can do to shape, support and sustain a high performance school climate in which children are safe, happy and successful. It acknowledges the work of governors in sustaining schools this year and concentrates on the themes that governors are focused on as schools look to build back better.

**Plenary Session – 11.15-12.00 BST**

#### ***The Role of Young People and Schools in the Sustainable Development Process***

**Kehkashan Basu, Founder President, Green Hope Foundation, UN Human Rights Champion, International Children's Peace Prize Winner**

Creating a sustainable world requires the involvement and participation of all sections of civil society, especially young people, being one the largest stakeholders of civil society. This keynote highlights how Education for Sustainable Development can be used as a transformative tool and the importance of schools and young people as critical drivers in this evolution.

**Breakout Sessions – 13.30-14.20 BST**

#### ***The Normality of Crisis***

**Dr Steffen Sommer, James Conly, Grant Gillies, Nicola Meikle, Ruth Sanderson, Tommy Westmoreland, Uzma Zaffar, Senior Leadership Team, Doha College**

The recent academic years will always be remembered for the challenges brought about by COVID-19. While the pandemic dominated all media channels, and newscasters across the globe competed with each other on doomsday messages regarding the adverse impact on schools, it is hardly imaginable that a school like Doha College could have

been faced with three other crises, which coincided with the pandemic, and, each in their own ways, equally challenged the future existence of the school. This presentation and discussion session will consider the Normality of Crisis, starting with an introduction from Dr Steffen Sommer, Principal, followed by a choice of four case study/discussion sessions looking at: Closing one school and opening a new one; Learnings and Reflections on the Summer 2020 Centre Assessment Grade Process at Doha College and coping with Remote and Blended Learning; School Admissions during a national lockdown; Dealing with the death of a student.

#### ***Approaches to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that Work!***

**Angela Browne, Coach and Consultant, Nourished Collective, and Hannah Wilson, Director, Diverse Educators**

Angie Browne and Hannah Wilson are passionate about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and even more passionate about ensuring that schools and teams within schools have actionable, practical solutions to managing their DEI strategy. Whether your strategy is in its early stages or more established this practical workshop will move your organisation forward in its DEI ambitions.

#### ***How to Retain Staff with a Cohesive Wellbeing Strategy***

**Dan Worth, Senior Editor, Tes, and John Bagust, Principal, New Cairo British International School**

Prior to Covid-19, the wellbeing of staff and students was becoming increasingly important for school leaders. There was a clear, albeit slow, shift towards providing a healthy work-life balance and alleviating unnecessary stresses. But in the last 18 months the wellbeing of the school community has moved from being a nice-to-have to becoming the bedrock of leaders' planning for the medium and long term. Having been through a year of turmoil, to help keep staff in post and improve staff retention, the mental health of colleagues and pupils must now be a visible part of school strategy, something that inspectorates such as Ofsted are starting to enforce. But how do schools transform wellbeing from a buzzword into a whole-school strategy? In this live seminar, Tes international editor Dan Worth will outline the surge Tes are predicting in the international recruitment market and how John Bagust at New Cairo British International School is approaching wellbeing and staff retention in 2021.

#### ***Governing in an Age of Uncertainty***

**Anthony Millard, Executive Chairman, Alun Jones, Benedict Dunhill and Lisa Phillipps, Associate Consultants, Anthony Millard Consulting**

The session aims to guide and advise school governors in recognising the key social and practical ways they may support their schools and assist them in understanding how they can support overall school improvement in all areas, as well as discussing the key areas of strategic planning within the current and post-pandemic phases.

#### ***The Market Data that Matters for Suppliers and Providers***

**Diane Glass, Commercial Director and Luke Pierce, Commercial Sales Manager, ISC Research (for Supporting Associates)**

This session will include headline data, trends and intelligence on the world's international schools market and the place of British international schools within it. It will also share practical advice on how to use market data accessible to you in order to be targeted in your engagement and messaging, and solutions on how to use international schools market intelligence and trends to continually develop your overall international schools sales and marketing strategy.

#### **Breakout Sessions – 16.00-16.50 BST**

#### ***Making the Employability Change an Opportunity, Not a Threat: How to Support and Enable Young People in a Climate of Change***

**Elizabeth Moore, Vice President of Learning Research and Design, Pearson**

The world is changing - fast. Globalisation, technology, an uncertain political landscape and a growing climate change emergency - it's no wonder that today's learners are actively engaged in determining their futures, clamouring for change and keen to shape the world they will inherit. Additionally, Pearson Research reveals that the skills and knowledge learned in childhood, or a degree earned in your twenties, won't be enough for success in the long term. Across the world, jobseekers are finding themselves overqualified, under skilled, or both. They no longer have the relevant skillsets so what do young people have to do to ensure they have that all-important 'employability factor'? This session, led by Elizabeth Moore, Vice President of Learning Research and Design at Pearson, will look at how you, as international school leaders, can support your learners as they rise to the new employability challenges and discuss how you can implement change in your school as part of a broad and balanced curriculum approach.

***School Marketing and Communications: New Pathways to Success Post Pandemic*****Max Eisl, Director of Sales International, and Jak Blackwood, Head of Sales, UK, Finalsite**

With 2020 firmly behind us, what lessons have we learned? Between the global pandemic, school closures, cancelled recruitment fairs, and movements including Black-Lives-Matter, school leaders faced untold challenges. But, in spite of these challenges, international school leaders prevailed, and in many cases, were beacons of information and hope to schools around the world. We saw school marketing and admissions put on their superhero capes and work tirelessly to keep everyone in their communities informed, engaged and optimistic. We saw teachers working around the clock to make sure students continued to learn while embracing new technologies overnight. We saw school communities come closer together and we even saw the international school community come closer together. Marketing, admissions, parent communication, fundraising, teacher recruitment, virtual events - all were impacted. But out of all the 'pivoting' and chaos, we see new pathways for schools to function more effectively.

**Tuesday 11 May 2021****Breakout Sessions – 08.00-08.50 BST*****A Strategic Commitment to using Data and Research to inform Pupil and Staff Wellbeing Initiatives*****Magnus Cowie, Deputy Head Pastoral, and Diane Trif, Graduate Researcher in Residence, Marlborough College Malaysia**

This session will share Marlborough College Malaysia's journey in using data on student and staff wellbeing to inform actions. This strategic direction reflects the College commitment to implement the principles of positive psychology with a focus on human flourishing, as developed by the University of Pennsylvania, with whom the College has had a working relationship. The actions relating to pupils include the promotion of pupil voice, initiatives within the extended curriculum and partnerships with parents. The actions relating to staff include the development of wellbeing surveys pre COVID and through various lockdown circumstances, including how these link to staff interventions and the formal professional review and development programme. Some projects are in discrete areas (including boarding) whilst others are applicable throughout the whole College: Early Years to Sixth Form. In all cases data was analysed in house, evaluated against current research into related areas and reviewed with the stakeholders prior to producing relevant action plans.

***#betterboards: Governance with a Heart*****Matthew Savage and Dr Helen Wright, Associate Consultants, LSC Education**

As the Board of an international school, you have a delicate balance to strike in order to provide effective governance. And the stakes could not be higher: get it right, and your school will flourish and thrive, but get it wrong, and the consequences can be quick and catastrophic. How do you give the Principal, and the school, what they want and need, whilst respecting the necessary limits and lines around the board's role? Does a school board demand a different skillset and approach from other industries, and how can you meet those demands? What are the manifold threats and challenges facing international schools today, and to what extent can you help your school weather those storms and come out stronger on the other side? This workshop will explore the key ingredients of effective governance, and, in these challenging times, help delegates to govern from the heart.

***Leading Change from Different Perspectives*****James McAleese, Head of Secondary, GEMS Winchester (Fujairah); Shafaque Riaz, Head of Computer Science and Digital Champion, GEMS Wellington Academy Silicon Oasis (sponsored by GCSEPod)**

This session will bring together two tiers of school leadership from one of the largest international private education providers in the world, GEMS Education. Drawing from their many years of experience, these presenters will share their different perspectives of working in a school group that saw edtech and blended learning as a facilitator for positive change before the pandemic had even begun.

***Where Next with Teaching and Learning? From Face to Face to Blended Pedagogies - Discussion*****Kai Vacher, Principal, British School Muscat**

Last year, our school developed an idea that, at the time, seemed novel, innovative and creative: delivering a whole curriculum through a mix of online and face-to-face teaching. Of course, within a few months, the whole world was doing likewise. But what we created was not about overcoming a pandemic, but something more fundamental: about international schools and their staff using their skills to help broaden access to education across their host country using a blended approach to teaching and learning we called FlexEd. As we emerge from the COVID imposed

hibernation how successful has FlexEd been and what are the possibilities for FlexEd 2.0 and beyond? Building on the recent COBIS ConnectED session about blended learning, this session will provide an opportunity for participants to contribute to an open discussion about the future of teaching and learning, and how the international school model may change going forward.

#### **Plenary Session – 9.05-9.55 BST**

##### ***Learning for an Interconnected World – Results from PISA’s First Assessment of Global Competence***

**Dr Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills, OECD**

Learning to live together. Globalisation and digitalisation have connected people, cities, countries and continents in ways that vastly increase our individual and collective potential. But the same forces have also made the world more volatile, more complex and more uncertain. The world has seen a growing disconnect between the infinite growth imperative and the finite resources of our planet; between the financial economy and the real economy; between the wealthy and the poor; between the concept of our gross domestic product and the well-being of people; and between technology and social needs. In this world, education is no longer just about teaching students something, but about helping them develop a reliable compass and the tools to navigate with confidence through an increasingly complex, volatile and uncertain world. These considerations led PISA, the global standard for measuring the quality of educational outcomes, to include ‘global competence’ in its latest evaluation of 66 school systems. To do well on this assessment, students had to demonstrate that they can combine knowledge about the world with critical reasoning, and that they were able to adapt their behaviour and communication to interact with individuals from different traditions and cultures. The presentation will present the results and discuss their policy implications.

#### **Breakout Sessions – 10.10-11.00 BST**

##### ***Are We Preparing our Learners Today for the Future of Tomorrow?***

**Priya Lakhani OBE, Founder CEO, CENTURY Tech**

The world of work is changing, both because of the pandemic and because of a longer-term shift towards AI and automation. Priya Lakhani, Founder CEO of CENTURY Tech delivers a short talk about what we as technology companies, leading schools, policy makers and educators can do to ensure we’re preparing our learners adequately for the future. We will then open it up to Q&A and discussion with delegates.

##### ***Intercultural and International Mindedness in the Face of Rising Nationalism***

**Carl Lander, Principal, Azerbaijan British College**

Intercultural and International mindedness, the global perspective is at the heart of a good education, as well as a driving factor towards understanding and peace. As nationalism rises around the world, how does a school maintain a global and intercultural mindset in the face of changing politics and war. This discussion group will draw on the speaker’s experiences in Latin America and the recent war in Azerbaijan, as well as those of the delegates, to better understand a school’s position when its community is at war and local politics seems to conflict with the school’s guiding statements.

##### ***Building Windows in Walls: Seeing Opportunity in the Face of Challenge***

**Fleur McLennan, Educational Consultant, Cambridge Assessment International Education**

Much has been lost from education in the last year. The consequences of this loss are still being played out in schools and homes alike but most noticeable has been the distinct fracture in the ties that bind schools to their communities. Significant, almost unanswerable, challenges are faced by those in leadership with very few practical solutions. Issues of access, equity and justice have arisen to compete with the ever present issues of accountability and performativity. However, opportunities in the face of this crisis are presenting themselves in the most unusual of ways, by affording an alternative perspective for leaders to consider; that perhaps renegotiating the purpose of leadership may enable a meaningful way forward and acknowledging there are risks involved in doing something but there is more risk involved with doing nothing. At the very heart of this is the idea of rebuilding a strong and resilient community in which the school is central. It is the window in the wall that will sustain and strengthen the bonds between teaching, learning and the community after this challenge has been overcome.

##### ***Put Your Own Oxygen Mask on First: Some Reflections on School Leader and Staff Wellbeing***

**Mark Steed, Principal and CEO, Kellett School, Hong Kong**

This presentation will look at the importance of school leaders looking out for their own wellbeing and offer some strategies to do this. It will look at ways that schools can enhance and support staff wellbeing. It will also tackle the thorny question of whether the responsibility for staff wellbeing resides with the individual teacher or with the school.

#### **Breakout Sessions – 13.30-14.20 BST**

##### ***The Virtues of the Virtual Accreditation Process***

**Panel chaired by Gary Minnitt, Director of Accreditation, COBIS**

Aimed at those schools interested in learning more about the COBIS Compliance and Accreditation scheme, this live panel discussion centres around the differences, benefits and challenges of the virtual process which COBIS developed in response to the travel restrictions around the pandemic. This is an opportunity to find out how your school can benefit from an effective, school-centred accreditation process which takes into account the context of the school whether in its early stages of development, or well-established. The panel will include heads with recent, first-hand experience of a remote visit who will share their reflections, talk about the benefits for their schools and answer the most frequently-asked questions.

##### ***Coaching for Change***

**David Porritt, KAA Director and School Principal, Karen Ardley Associates**

The place and role of coaching has gathered momentum in recent years across COBIS schools. We know that coaching is a powerful mechanism for promoting change. Whilst we already recognise that those who receive coaching are more able to cope with change, this workshop identifies the personal and professional benefits arising for the coach. David's doctoral research, conducted over the last 5 years uncovered a range of benefits for school leaders' self-efficacy beliefs and professional learning. Fundamentally, the research in its simplest terms shows that one of the best things we can do to cope with change and foster our own wellbeing, is learn to coach others. Not only does serving others through coaching help coachees, but it also powerfully contributes to leaders' own learning and development.

##### ***How to be Data-Led with your School Business Decisions***

**Ashley Kirk, Sales Director and Doris Suchet, School Development Manager, ISC Research**

This session will share practical advice on how schools can use market data and intelligence accessible to you to inform and guide your school business decisions.

##### ***ConnectED Supporting Associates (for Supporting Associates)***

Supporting Associates and other companies attending the COBIS Annual Conference are invited to join this ConnectED session – an informal networking session to discuss opportunities and challenges for organisations offering products and services to the international schools sector, and to consider the support available from COBIS.

#### **Breakout Sessions – 16.00-17.00 BST**

##### ***ConnectED Americas***

Member and non-Member schools are invited to join this networking and discussion session to consider opportunities and challenges for schools in the Americas. Supporting Associates are also welcome to attend.

### **Wednesday 12 May 2021**

#### **07.40-07.55 BST**

##### **#FeelGoodFifteen**

**Sharon Durant, Sing-Up**

Join Sing Up for a #Feelgood15 minutes of singing for wellbeing. This practical session will leave you feeling energised and uplifted. Find out how regular singing can improve wellbeing and mental health with the benefits being felt by pupils and teachers alike. Live on YouTube, we encourage you to share the link and get your school community involved. Suitable for everyone aged 5 and over.

#### **Breakout Sessions – 08.00-09.00 BST**

**ConnectED Asia**

Member and non-Member schools are invited to join this networking and discussion session to consider opportunities and challenges for schools in Asia. Supporting Associates are also welcome to attend.

**ConnectED MENA**

Member and non-Member schools are invited to join this networking and discussion session to consider opportunities and challenges for schools in the Middle East and North Africa. Supporting Associates are also welcome to attend.

**Safeguarding for Governors in International Schools****Emily Konstantas, CEO, The Safeguarding Alliance**

This session will explore the safeguarding role and responsibility of the Governor in an international school setting, offering the opportunity for delegates to consolidate knowledge and understanding of safeguarding of children and young people. The session examines current safeguarding legislation and explores how to recognise and respond to disclosures, critical incidents, including illness, injury, security events and emergency situations. It will focus on identifying, responding, reporting and referring concerns.

**Plenary Session – 09.20-10.10 BST****Change the World****Baroness Floella Benjamin, DBE DL, Actress, Broadcaster, and Advocate for Children’s Welfare and Education**

Floella tells of her childhood journey to England as a ten-year-old girl, a story which she wrote as a bestselling book ‘Coming to England’. She talks about how she overcame many adversities and obstacles by having a positive attitude and learning to face them with a smile and her philosophy of life her 3 C’s. She takes the audience on an inspirational journey by showing how they too can make a difference and change the world for children and young people, especially those from disadvantage backgrounds. Through her charitable work including her media appearances and life in Parliament she explains her mission to get everyone to focus on the important fact that ‘Childhood lasts a Lifetime’.

**Breakout Sessions – 10.30-11.20 BST****ConnectED Europe**

Member and non-Member schools are invited to join this networking and discussion session to consider opportunities and challenges for schools in Europe. Supporting Associates are also welcome to attend.

**ConnectED Africa**

Member and non-Member schools are invited to join this networking and discussion session to consider opportunities and challenges for schools in Africa. Supporting Associates are also welcome to attend.

**The Science of Learning: Moving Beyond “What Works” to “Why and How it Works”****Prof Stuart Kime, Director of Education, Evidence Based Education**

Education is constructed on the foundations of decisions made by students, teachers, parents and leaders. But what underpins those decisions? When you look below the surface, what are the foundations you find, and how secure are they? In education, why do we do the things we do? For some educators, developing deep knowledge of what learning is, why and how it happens, and the approaches, strategies and techniques most likely to promote it, has been left to chance. The foundations we need to make the best decisions we can have not always been robustly built. The science of learning provides many of those robust foundations. It helps educators move beyond “what works” to “why and how it works” and, in so doing, empowers them to make contextualised, evidence-informed decisions. In this session, Prof Stuart Kime will take you on a journey from our human cognitive architecture to evidence-informed classroom strategies, laying the foundations to bridge the gap between research evidence and professional decisions.

**How to Support your Students to be Leaders in their Lives and Communities****Panel of students, chaired by Jonathan Harper, CEO, Future Foundations Training Ltd.**

In November 2020, COBIS and Future Foundations brought together 189 young people aged 11-18 from 18 different countries attending COBIS schools around the world to connect online for three days of sharing, learning and action, as part of the COBIS GSL Leadership Weekend. The young people explored topics such as Leadership, Social Action, Resilience and Wellbeing. Join this spotlight session to hear from direct from students who took part in the weekend, share their experience, and explore how we can support your students to be leaders in their lives and communities.

### ***International Export Update***

**Vipul Bhargava, International Schools, Early Years, and Education Technology Specialist, Department for International Trade (for Supporting Associates)**

An update for Supporting Associates and companies providing goods and services to international schools, on the support available from the Department for International Trade.

### **Plenary Session – 15.50-12.05 BST**

#### ***Embedding and Promoting Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in British International Schools***

**School case study presented by Michael Lambert, Headmaster, Dubai College followed by a panel discussion. Chair: Claire Nuttall, Head Teacher (Primary) / Vice Principal, St George's International School, Luxembourg. Panellists: Hannah Edgeworth, Primary Educator, Dubai and Advisory Board Member, Inclusion Labs; Jason Morrow, Head, The British International School of New York; Alysa Perreras, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Coach, The Columbus School, Columbia; Bukky Yusuf, Senior Leader and Science Lead, Edith Kay School, UK**

In the wake of the killing of George Floyd it would be easier to count the UK independent schools who were not targeted by Black Lives Matter than those who were. And yet for most UK schools this kind of attention came as a shock. Isn't systemic racism a peculiarly US problem? Isn't BLM a uniquely US solution? As British Schools Overseas it is just as easy to believe that BLM is not our issue. We are apolitical institutions whose role is to respect our host nations. Right? Wrong. I can tell you that on 4th July Black Lives Matter became a COBIS issue when Dubai College joined 1500 US and UK schools to be the subject of Instagram accounts calling out historic racism over decades. This case study tells our story and the journey of discovery we have been on ever since. The case study will be followed by a panel discussion exploring the theme of embedding and promoting diversity, equality and inclusion in British international schools.

### **14.15-14.45 BST**

#### ***Mindfulness Taster Session***

**Ashley Lodge and Lisa Wren, Pearson**

A brief introduction to mindfulness including a practice/meditation. In this 30-minute introduction to mindfulness Ashley will talk through what it is, the psychology and neuroscience underpinning it, and lead a short practice (mediation) to allow participants to fully experience mindfulness. Please note this session won't be recorded.

### **Breakout Sessions – 16.00-16.50 BST**

#### ***Distance not Distant Teacher Education***

**Dionne Ross, Principal Lecturer, and Susan Edgar, Head of School of Education, University of Sunderland**

The global demand for high quality education is being met by qualified UK trained teachers. The reputation of British teacher education is continuously increasing as universities provide alternative routes to qualification. By offering IDL distance teacher education, AOR to QTS and now iQTS we are meeting the needs of schools to train teachers to high standards who can adapt to a range of international settings. There is a growing understanding that teaching online is different from teaching face-to-face. Integral to this is ensuring that trainee teachers feel that although they are at a distance that they are not distant to their tutors. This support is integral to the success of the online distance teacher education.

#### ***The Opportunity to Empower Learners for a Future of Change***

**Dr Karem Roitman, Lead author of the Global Skills Project Curriculum, Oxford University Press**

This session will look at the opportunities to empower independent learners through courageous and creative changes in education. Global Skills expert Karem Roitman will reflect on how recent challenges can be used as inspiration and points of change. We will discuss how education can be tailored to empower students as skilled, adaptive agents of change ready to tackle challenges not yet envisioned. We will learn about the need for a global outlook, the options and challenges technology gives us, and present strategies to develop independence, creativity, resilience, confidence, and community.

**Thursday 13 May 2021**

## Breakout Sessions – 08.00-08.50 BST

### ***Student Wellbeing in the New Normal***

#### **Panel chaired by Amanda Clarke, International Director, GL Education**

The events of the last 18 months have resulted in an even-greater focus on student wellbeing in international schools. For many, the initial focus was on supporting the vulnerable students they knew about but over time the picture has become more nuanced. Some students have thrived during periods of lockdown while others may have become dis-engaged. Confusion over high-stakes examinations is clearly causing stress amongst once-confident students. Amanda Clarke will review the big picture with Crispin Chatterton, GL Education's Director of Education, looking at data from the wellbeing survey Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) taken by thousands of students globally. She will then review the practical implications with two international school leaders, discussing the key wellbeing challenges they have faced over the last 15 months, how they addressed them and how they are meeting the evolving needs of their students now. Amanda and Crispin will be joined by Derek Watson, Deputy Head Pastoral - Primary, Doha College and Luke Rees, Deputy Head Teacher, JESS Dubai.

### ***Next Steps: Exploring Changes, Challenges and Opportunities in Early Childhood Education***

#### **Phil Armstrong, Head of International Development, Early Excellence**

Following the publication of the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, schools will need to start to unpick and question the implications at both leadership and practitioner level. Careful scrutiny and understanding of these materials, as well as conversations about how to inform and support colleagues during this time, will be a high priority for all those working in Early Childhood Education. Join this session to ensure you are fully updated about the changes ahead for the EYFS and receive valuable guidance at both a strategic and practical level on supporting your youngest children and those working with them.

### ***Inspiration for Sustainable Schools and Companies***

#### **Andrew Griffiths, Director of Digital and Community, and Amelie Trolle, Head of Engagement, Planet Mark**

In this session we will be exploring real examples of COBIS schools and organisations who have committed to measuring and reducing their carbon emissions. We will explore the process they've gone through to reach this point and then in practical breakouts we will brainstorm ideas for reducing our environmental impact as schools and companies.

## Breakout Sessions – 09.05-10.00 BST

### ***Building Your Organisational Change Muscle: Lessons from Neuroscience and Behavioural Psychology to Successfully Lead in a Climate of Change and Beyond***

#### **Dr Sarah Howling, Coach and Consultant, The Connection Revolution (sponsored by TTS)**

We know that up to 70% of change projects fail to achieve their goals. So what does this mean for schools in crisis or when change is constant? We also know that when we engage people in change it's 30% more likely to be successful. So how do schools engage people in change even when the change is unwanted or unexpected? This workshop/presentation will explore lessons from neuroscience and behavioural psychology to support leaders in strengthening their school 'change muscle' and grow organisational resilience. We'll delve into research, strategies, and reflection so that leaders can build their change resilience toolkit to not just survive but transform and thrive through change in 2021 and beyond.

### ***Leveraging Middle Leadership, Especially in Times of Challenge***

#### **Emily Rankin, Deputy Head of Upper School & Teaching and Learning, and Laurence Baxter, Deputy Head of Pastoral, English College in Prague; Patrick Heuff, Head of Secondary, St George's The British International School Munich; Catrin Sherwood, Head of Primary and Russell Johnston, Head of Secondary, St George's The British International School Cologne; chaired by Janette Quinn, Assistant Director of Accreditation and CPML Course Leader, COBIS;**

Middle leaders' multifaceted roles have been made even more complex by the challenges of the pandemic. This session will explore how this critical group can continue to lead teams with dynamism in the face of adversity, wedding systems with care and accountability. It will also discuss the conditions senior leaders need to create in order for middle leaders to flourish. Colleagues from English College in Prague will provide anecdotes from their school experiences, as well as create space for reflection and share some tools that can best leverage the skills and expertise of middle leaders. In the second half of the session, Janette Quinn will lead a Q&A with colleagues who have been involved in facilitation of the COBIS Programme of Middle Leadership to consider the impact of middle leaders in the wider school.

**Two School Case Studies: *Human Connectivity in a Time of Remote Learning*****Jon Turner, Head of Secondary, Baobab College, Zambia*****Back to Port or Sail Further out to Sea?*****Dr Daniela Vasile, Director of Learning, Avenor College, Romania**

This split session will comprise two school case studies. *Human Connectivity in a Time of Remote Learning*: Wellbeing of a school community has never been as severely tested as it has during our periods of remote learning. This session focuses on the role of human connectivity in dealing with this challenge and cites examples of how one school in Zambia, Baobab College, has approached the situation. *Back to Port or Sail Further out to Sea?*: The global pandemic has shaken the world of education, exposing some of the key foundations that have been relied upon for over 100 years. In many ways the system has been shown to be inflexible and lacking agility, two key requirements in the 21st century. Short-term measures might have addressed some of the current challenges, but innovations in the best interest of students call upon a professional commitment to re-examine the school structures. At Avenor College, we launched a process of co-creating the best future by a community-wide consultation on the Avenor Learner profile. The whole-community involvement released unseen opportunities to open the path towards meeting our vision of becoming a progressive landmark not only for Romania, but for the rest of the world. It all started with a pandemic and with the decision of what mindset to adopt: shall we return back to port or sail further out to sea?

***Transforming Change into Success: How to Navigate Digital Turbulence*****Jon Cronin, Education Consultant, Engage**

When turbulence is the new normal, a school's success depends on vigilant leadership that can anticipate threats, spot opportunities, and act quickly when the time is right. Before the coming of COVID-19, technological forces already required schools to manage change and make decisions more quickly than ever before. The pandemic has vastly intensified those needs. Never have schools of all sizes felt so much pressure to adapt their learning practices and introduce technological solutions. During this session we will explore how schools could use agile management techniques and principles to ensure appropriate software solutions become embedded into whole-school procedures, creating a stable and adaptive technological platform which allows all members of their community to thrive.

**Plenary Session – 10.20-11.15 BST*****Imperfect Leadership at a Time of Uncertainty*****Professor Steve Munby, Consultant and Speaker**

None of us were taught how to lead in a pandemic nor is it on any leadership development program. So how do we lead during this unprecedentedly uncertain period? Steve will argue that we need leaders who embrace the fact that they are imperfect. Imperfect leaders know their strengths and weaknesses, value their teams, ask for help and show authenticity.

**More Information and Booking Forms: [www.cobis.org.uk/annualconference](http://www.cobis.org.uk/annualconference)**