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COBIS | Council of British
International Schools

44th COBIS Annual Conference
Listen. Learn. Lead.

PROGRAMME
9 - 11 May 2026



Headline sponsor



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#COBIS26

Saturday 9 May 2026

12:45-14:45	More Commendations than Recommendations: Making the Most of Your COBIS Accreditation and Compliance Journey (optional pre-conference course) (Commercial 1)
15:00-16:00	COBIS UK Ltd AGM (open to Member Schools only) (Bishopsgate 1)
18:30-21:30	Welcome Reception and Dinner (sponsored by MSP LAB) (Devonshire Terrace)

Sunday 10 May 2026

08:15	EXHIBITION OPENS
09:00-09:30	Welcome and Opening Remarks Colin Bell, CEO, Jim Knight, Chair, COBIS (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
09:30-10:30	PLENARY SESSION Frank Gardner, BBC Security Correspondent (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
10:35-11:10	EXHIBITION AND BREAK Informal meet-up: New School Members, New Heads, and First-Time Conference Attendees from schools are invited to an informal meet-up with members of the COBIS Board (Cambridge Stand 72)
11:10-12:10	MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS Building Effective Teams: Creating Impact in Education Francesco Banchini, European Azerbaijan School (Commercial 1) Reimagining Leadership and Learning with and for the Community: A Strategic Shift in Continuing School Improvement for International Schools Olivia Roth, CIS; Maria Osowiecki, COBIS (Bishopsgate 2) Building Student Voice Ecosystems: Designing Leadership That Drives Systemic Change Calvin Eden, Global Edge (Commercial 4) Preparing Students and Schools for a World That Does Not Exist Dr Luke Roberts, Resolve Consultants Ltd (Commercial 2) AI Safeguarding in Schools: Addressing the Six Priority Risks with Confidence Matthew Wemyss, Cambridge School of Bucharest Human-First AI Curriculum: What Early-Adopting Schools are Learning Rita Bateson, Eblana Learning (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room) Beyond School Improvement and Inspection Prof Deborah Eyre, High Performance Learning (Cambridge Room – Bishopsgate 1) Building Inclusive International School Communities Sarah Brannon, Brighton College Dubai Juxtaposing Practices that Reinforce Social Differences: A Sense-Making Exercise to Promote Inclusivity Michael Neumann, St George's International School, Luxembourg (Commercial 3)
12:10-13:10	LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS (silent seminars at 12:25 and 12:45)
13:10-13:25	PLENARY SESSION – COBIS Updates (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
13:25-13:40	PLENARY SESSION – British International Schools Safeguarding Coalition Update Emily Konstantas, The Safeguarding Alliance; Fiona Cottam, Hartland International School (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
13:40-14:25	PLENARY SESSION – The Science, Art and Craft of Teaching Andreas Schleicher, OECD; Lauren Binnington, St Christopher's School, Bahrain; Stephanie Holt, DSB International School (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
13:20-14:00	Supporting Associate and Exhibitor Meet-Up: Making the Most of Your COBIS Benefits (Commercial 1)

14:30-15:30	AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS Navigating the Future: Preparing Learners to Thrive in a Changing World Dr Irenka Suto, Cambridge (Cambridge Room – Bishopsgate 1) Building Global Pathways for Teacher Development Victoria Pugh, COBIS; Dionne Ross, University of Sunderland; Fran Vulpiani, St George's British International School (Commercial 1) From Start-Up to Established: Leading with Optimism When Everything is Changing Louise Salmond Smith and Shaun O'Keeffe, Haileybury Malta CHASE Kindness: Leading Schools with Empathy and Impact Joanna Povall, Wales International School (Commercial 4) Navigating Leadership Transitions: Findings from a Global Study of International Schools Heather Styche-Patel, RSAcademics and Matt Hall, Making Stuff Better (Bishopsgate 2) The Sustainability Algorithm: Disrupting Education for a Flourishing Planet Simon Burbury, Marlborough College Malaysia and Andrew Watson, Sustainability Education (Commercial 3) Strengthening Governance in the International Sector Alex Mitchell, AGBIS International; Mick Smith, COBIS; Judith Green, Veema (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room) Outside the Box: Integrating Hybrid Delivery of the Curriculum to Solve Old Problems and Create New Opportunities Panel: Rob Jamieson, Pearson School Qualifications; Paul Glossop, University of Derby; Rufus Sanders, Inspired Online Schools; Hugh Viney, Minerva Virtual Academy; Melissa McBride, Sophia High School (Commercial 2)
15:30-16:00	EXHIBITION AND BREAK
16:00-16:50	PLENARY SESSION David Olusoga, Historian and Broadcaster (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
16:50-17:00	Round-Up, Thank You and Close (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
17:00-18:00	Wine Reception with Exhibitors (sponsored by Go4Schools) (Exhibition Area)

Monday 11 May 2026

08:15	EXHIBITION OPENS
09:00-09:15	WELCOME (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
09:15-09:45	PLENARY SESSION – Student Panel (sponsored by University of Sunderland and Evolve Advice) Panel chaired by Vanita Uppal OBE, The British School New Delhi (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
09:45-10:30	PLENARY SESSION Susie Dent MBE, Lexicographer, Etymologist and Presenter; facilitated by Simon O'Connor, Harrow International School Dubai (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
10:30-11:00	EXHIBITION AND BREAK
11:05-12:10	MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS Listen. Learn. Lead. – Sustaining Human Purpose in an Age of Acceleration. A 25-year reflection Karen Ardley and Dr David Porritt, Karen Ardley Associates (Commercial 4) Five Steps to Success in COBIS Accreditation and Compliance Processes COBIS Accreditation Team (Bishopsgate 2) How to Predict the Future David Tongue, Doha College (Commercial 1) The Great Candidate Migration: Using the Latest Global Teacher Mobility Data to Strengthen Recruitment in a Changing Geopolitical Climate Dan Worth, Tes (Cambridge Room – Bishopsgate 1) The Power of Productive Inefficiency: Building Resilient Schools in a Fast-Changing World Christopher O'Shaughnessy (Commercial 2)

	The Future of Wellbeing in International Schools: Insights from Leaders Who Are Changing the Game Steph Hawkins, Well Well Well; Rhiannon Phillips-Bianco, Globeducate; Tomas Duckling, Dubai College; Martin van der Linde, The British School Manila (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room) Building and Sustaining Positive Collaboration to Impact School Culture Claire Waller and Patrick Heuff, The British School in the Netherlands (Commercial 3)
12:10-13:05	LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS (silent seminars at 12:25 and 12:45)
13:05-13:20	PLENARY SESSION – COBIS Updates (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
13:20-13:35	PLENARY SESSION – Beyond Growth: What the Latest Data Reveals About International Schools Leigh Webb, ISC Research (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
13:35-14:15	PLENARY SESSION – Hope and Positivity in Times of Conflict Dr Attaullah Wahidyar, HHOA; fireside chat with Jim Knight, COBIS (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
14:20-15:20	AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS Courageous Authenticity Before, After and During Crisis Management Sarah Chesworth and Dr Glenn Moodie, KTJ (Commercial 4) Disruption and Design: Learning in a Changing World Joseph Kotarski, NEASC; Kai Vacher, British School Muscat (Commercial 3) Listen, Learn, Lead Across Cultures: Culturally Mediated Leadership (CML) in British International Schools Joshua Sussex, XCL International School, Penang Whose Normal is it Anyway? Redefining Leadership for Every Context Laura Stansfield, Braeburn Schools; Tim Richards, Braeburn Garden Estate International School (Commercial 1) When Students Feel Seen: The Power of Measuring What Makes Us Truly Human Nick Reeves, Colegio Colombo Británico Building Values-Driven Schools Through Student Voice & Wellbeing Data John Ford, YouHQ (Commercial 2) Three School Case Studies – Developing New Strands Designing Holistic Online Education Beth Haresnape, Crimson Global Academy Embedding Middle School Change through an Extended Residential Programme Craig Considine, Tanglin Trust School Leading Together: Strengthening Home–School Partnerships for Student Success Daniela Quadrio Santofimio and Mariajosé Otálora, Colegio Anglo Colombiano (Cambridge Room – Bishopsgate 1) Managing Adult Conduct Concerns with Care: Balancing Accountability with Empathy Leila Holmyard and Jane Larsson, International Taskforce on Child Protection (Bishopsgate 2)
15:20-15:45	EXHIBITION AND BREAK
15:45-16:35	PLENARY SESSION – Storying the Future Jane Nash and Dan Milne, Directors and Lead Trainers, Narativ (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
16:35-16:45	THANK YOU AND CONFERENCE CLOSE (Finsbury Suite – Plenary Room)
18:45-19:30	44th COBIS Annual Reception (Lincoln's Inn)
19:30-22:00	44th COBIS Annual Dinner (sponsored by Zenda) (Lincoln's Inn)

Download the conference app (Whova) for full speaker and session details and additional on-demand sessions:

