



ISSUE 22

One Family

with Wonder

Cognitive Load:
What is a distractor?

Sequencing:
Key Prerequisites

Explore Wonder...

Employment Rights Bill

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Wonder
Learning Partnership
Educate | Empower | Engage | Enrich

One Family

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Welcome to the Wonder Learning Partnership

We believe passionately, as a rural charitable Trust, that our children, in our villages, market and coastal towns, should be entitled to an education that celebrates the traditions of our communities, which recognises the history and values of our rural schools, their individuality and distinctiveness.

We are child focused, driven by an absolute desire to know and care for each child as an individual. A love of learning and a real passion for teaching. Our mission is to ensure every child receives the very best teaching, follows a challenging and exciting curriculum that broadens their understanding and provides a wealth of knowledge, not only within specific subjects, but across disciplines and time. Exposing them to the true majesty and wonder of creation, within nature, across the world, in different cultures and societies.

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“Wonder is the beginning of wisdom” Socrates

Our Values

Educate

We are committed to educating the whole child and believe every child should reach their potential.

Empower

We will empower our whole school community through support, development, and value in the pursuit of excellence.

Engage

We will engage in best practice to develop the personal qualities and aspirations of pupils and staff.

Enrich

We will ensure our children are exposed to a wealth of experiences and opportunities.

We welcome any school partner into the Wonder Learning Partnership and look forward to hearing from you. Our team is here to help across a breadth of areas whether this is peer to peer support, compliance, curriculum development or if you are seeking to join our Trust. Please get in touch at office@wlp.education.



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Wonder School Family News

Cave Paintings

We have enjoyed seeing children at Melbourne Primary School taking themselves back in time by emulating Hunter Gatherers. The children used berries to create their own versions of cave paintings in their storytelling. The children worked incredibly hard with thoughtful drawings and stories. True historians!

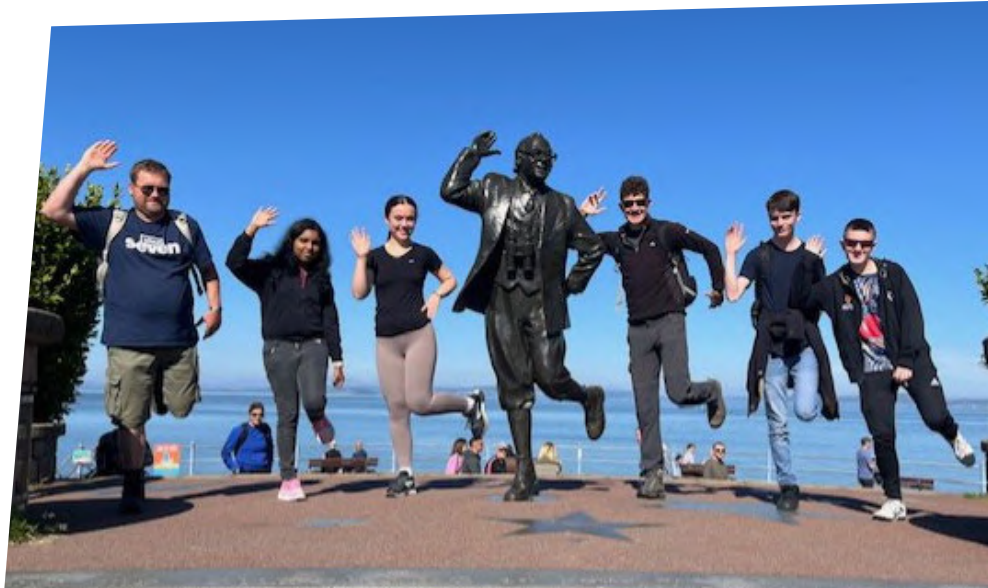


Teamwork

Welcome to the Early Years Foundation Stage at Stamford Bridge Primary School where teamwork is already being embraced as the children pumped, created and explored the water tray through games and pure imagination. We look forward to seeing the children develop throughout the academic year and seeing how the children's thirst for learning expands.

Morecambe brings Geographers Sunshine!

Year 13 Geographers at Longcroft School and Sixth Form College visited Castle Head Field Studies Centre in the beautiful Grange-over-Sands last week to conduct geographical fieldwork and collect data for their independent investigation. Days 1 and 2 entailed students practising a range of data collection techniques, including conducting pilot studies which were specific to their areas of interest – coastal management and regeneration in Morecambe. These ranged from beach profiles, salt marsh sampling to 'rephotography' and clone town surveys. On days 3 and 4, students went into the field and collected the data for their own specific investigation.



Wonder School Family News



NEST

Children who use the NEST, Pocklington Junior School's Enhance Resource Provision (ERP), have continued to build upon strengthening their resilience and stamina in both their work and activities this term. Some fantastic progress has been noted in their foundational fluency in maths and their reading fluency too! It is fabulous to hear of the progress and see how this provision is making such a huge impact.



Cambridge Challenge Results

Over the past year, students at Whitby School have been working hard competing through various rounds of the 2024 Cambridge Biology Challenge. The challenge is open to pupils/students from Year 10 to Year 13.

The Cambridge Biology Challenge, run by Homerton College is a nationwide competition which challenges students to think deeply about the sort of questions that are asked at Cambridge. Teams of up to five students have two weeks to submit a response as questions are released. Teams can choose whatever form they wish for the response, including posters, videos, podcasts and essays.



Wonder School Family News

Amazing Pupils

Two pupils at Woldgate School are shining in their sporting fields.

Autograss British Champion – Junior 600

Alfie started training in 2021 and going to different clubs all around the UK. This was his first year doing Club Meets. British Autograss Series involves racing for 5 rounds with everyone getting 3 Races and the Top 8 finishers, go to the finals. He went on to compete in the Junior Nationals and his dad, in the Men's National, which he won! A new class was introduced this year for 14–16-year-olds. This is called the Junior 600 and Alfie competed in this and won this title and then went on to win the British and National Championships! Congratulations Alfie.



Silver Medalist WKC Karate World Championships

Hannah started Karate when she was 8 years old. Her first belt, after my White, was Red, followed by Orange, Yellow, Green, Purple and she is currently on a Brown. Hannah trains twice a week for an hour and a half at the Drifffield Karate Association. She achieved Silver in her Kata Section and Silver in her Team Kumite (fighting) Section.



Estates and Compliance

Adele Pinder, Trust Director of Estates and Compliance

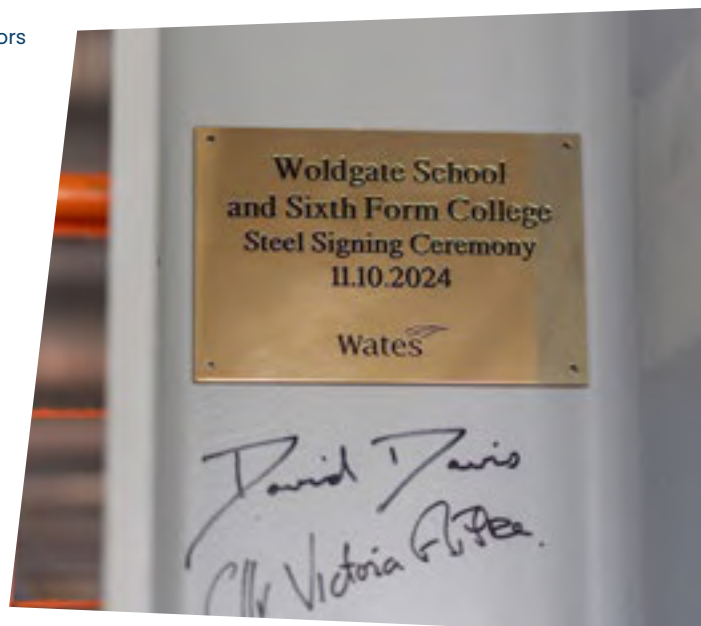
Construction Milestone Celebrated with MP Visit to Woldgate School

Woldgate School and Sixth Form, Pocklington, has celebrated its latest construction milestone with a steel signing ceremony, hosted by contractors Wates, the Department for Education, and Wonder Learning Partnership.

The ceremony provided the opportunity to share the success of the work completed so far and demonstrate how this rebuild project will not only create an exceptional learning facility for the young people of Pocklington and surrounding area but also how the local community is benefitting during and after its completion.

The event held on Friday 11th October was attended by local stakeholders Sir David Davis, MP for Pocklington and Goole, local Mayor Roly Cronshaw, Councillor Victoria Aitken of East Riding of Yorkshire Council, as well as pupils and representatives from across the Department for Education, Wonder Learning Partnership and Wates.

The redevelopment of Woldgate School includes the demolition of existing buildings from the 50s and 60s, to create a new 8,830-sq m school and sixth form for 1450 pupils. The new scheme will consist of a new three-storey school building – with atrium, auditorium, library, classrooms and laboratories – sports block and MUGA pitch, new bus drop-off and layby, as well as carparking and various hard and soft landscaping.



Delivered via the DfE's MMC Framework as part of the School Rebuilding programme, the project will deliver brand new state-of-the-art learning space for pupils and teachers. It has been carefully designed to be Net Zero Carbon in Operation (NZCiO), using materials with low embodied carbon, extensive use of solar PV and increasing biodiversity through careful landscaping to integrate with the surrounding countryside.

Elsewhere, sustainability is being prioritised through construction by utilising Wates' offsite manufacturing facility Prism, modern methods of construction, and diverting hard-to-recycle waste from landfill.

The project is also driving investment into the community, where Wates is delivering a range of Social Value initiatives supporting employment, skills, sustainability and social enterprises. Already, targets have been beaten with 16 new jobs created for local people, and more than £431,000 spent with local small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Works began in March 2024 and are scheduled to complete by 2027. Works are being led by Wates in partnership with SES Engineering Services which is delivering mechanical, electrical and plumbing services (MEP).

Stuart Leslie, operations director at Wates, said: "This steel signing has been a chance for us to celebrate our work so far here at Woldgate and the opportunities this new learning environment will bring students, as well as our partnerships with the DfE, school, supply chain and the local area.

"This open and collaborative relationship with our partners has been vital to our success so far, particularly while delivering a carefully controlled plan of works in a live school environment. While we've also worked to establish what social investment best suits the local community's needs, creating opportunities for young people to begin careers through T-Levels and apprenticeships."

Adele Pinder, Trust Director of Estates and Compliance for the Wonder Learning Partnership, added: "Working alongside Wates Group, DfE and partners on this project and seeing the project develop is incredible. There is a huge amount of history linked to Woldgate School within the community, but we know the development here is going to provide generations of learners to come with exceptional opportunities. This event is an important step in recognising the scale of the project as Wates Group work within a live school site. We are so pleased our pupils are part of the rebuild journey too."

Sir David Davis, MP for Pocklington & Goole, said: "This is an exciting time for Woldgate School & Sixth Form College. The redevelopment of the school buildings will help ensure the delivery of the very best education to pupils at the school.

"It was interesting to hear how these cutting-edge learning facilities will be used and I am glad to see that outside of school hours, the school intends to make the sports facilities available to local residents and clubs. This is a project that will benefit all of Pocklington and I look forward to seeing the redevelopment progress in the months and years ahead."



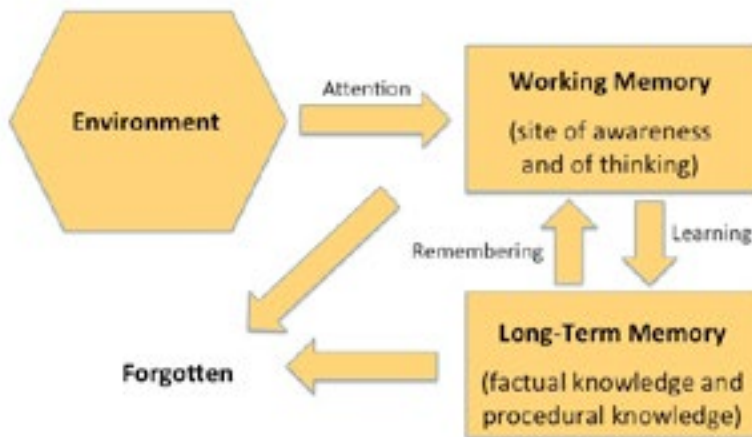


To view or not to view; what is a distractor?

I often participate in training sessions where the starting point is Willingham’s working memory model, and I am sure many of you will already have seen the diagram below and heard colleagues’ comments on cognitive overload. So, for those of you who are well versed in this topic, please bear with me as I provide a simple overview of the working memory model for my more novice readers.



Kirsten Russell
Trust Assistant Director of
IoE and Training School



Simply speaking the brain is bombarded with millions of pieces of information on a daily basis via our senses. Fortunately, our brain is very adept at filtering information deemed irrelevant, so, it never actually reaches our working memory, it is simply forgotten. One way to illustrate this is for you to carefully read the sentence below.

I expect that you are sitting down as you read this article, perhaps you have your elbows on the table or desk.

Now that I have pointed this out to you, you are suddenly paying attention to it, you are consciously thinking and aware of both the sensation of sitting and the feeling of the table on your elbows, prior to me alerting you to this, your brain had filtered this irrelevant information and hence it had been forgotten.

So, now we know that the first step to remembering stimuli is to be consciously aware of it, and it is from this awareness or attention, that thinking manifests in our working memory. Thinking however will also involve you pulling information and skills from your long-term memory so that you are able to make sense or connect some of your new learning to your existing schemata. If a pupil has not already acquired the necessary knowledge and skills in their long-term memory, then they may find the new information confusing and meaningless, resulting in them being unable to transfer this to their long-term memory, and hence it will be forgotten.



Capacity of working memory

We also know that the capacity of our working memory model is limited to approximately five pieces of information, whilst the long-term memory is thought to be infinite. This presents a challenge for educationalists as they constantly must be mindful of the cognitive load being experienced by their pupils.

One way that educationalists are mindful of cognitive load, is by introducing information in small manageable chunks. But it is possible to reduce cognitive load even before we reach this point in a lesson, by using strategies to recognise and minimise the environmental distractors within our classrooms.

We all want our classrooms to look inviting and welcoming for our pupils but what if this is actually impeding on their learning. We have already established that the capacity of working memory is limited, and we often assume that it is teacher instruction that may cause a cognitive overload, but pupils can also experience cognitive overload if they start to pay attention to environmental distractors.

The most common environmental distractors in our classrooms are either visual or acoustic, and in this article, I am primarily going to focus on visual distractors. But before I begin, it might be useful to try and see your classroom through the lens of a pupil. One way to do this is by sitting at a pupil's desk and scanning the classroom to see if you can identify any potential visual distractors that could impact on your pupils' attention or cognitive load.

When I did this activity, I found that my top three classroom visual distractors were:

1. Display boards
2. The classroom clock
3. Windows

Display Boards

When I sat at a pupil's desk, looking at the whiteboard, I found my attention being drawn to the various bits of information on the walls and the display boards that were positioned at the front of the classroom. To be honest, I had not realised how easy it was to just flick my eyes left and right, to be entertained by these different displays, I found myself reading the content automatically and it was only then that I appreciated that the highest visual risk of pupil cognitive overload was going to come from the front wall of the classroom.

I did consider that the displays were mainly informative as there were lots of formulae for financial calculations, and key terms definitions, but when I thought about it, I realised that these were not used daily or even weekly and therefore did not play a useful purpose in the majority of my lessons.

As I examined the other display boards around the classroom, I came to a similar conclusion; and although I found the display boards down the side of the room less distracting, they still featured in my peripheral vision and were a potential source of cognitive load.

The display boards at the back of the room, presented no threat to cognitive load, as they were not in the direct line of sight of the board, but that of course, would be dependent on the layout of your seating, which would require all pupils to be sitting in rows facing the front.



Does content make a difference?

I also considered the different content that featured on the display boards, informative displays versus the aesthetic displays of pupils work. The former promoting learning with the latter celebrating learning, arguably the latter does not directly aid learning, but it does indirectly act to motivate learning, and definitely has an important role to play in our schools. Perhaps, there is actually an important distinction to be made between these two types of visual stimuli and rather than calling all boards display boards, we should actively think about the role of each board and how and where they are displayed in our schools and classrooms.

Rather than calling all boards display boards, we should actively think about the role of each board

How do we retain valuable visuals whilst balancing the cognitive load?

Removing all the display boards, posters and information from the front and the side of the classroom would dramatically reduce the risk of visual distractions in the environment and hence reduce cognitive load. You would still be able to retain the display boards at the back of the room. On the downside however, it may result in classrooms looking cold and uninviting, and in my opinion, we would also lose valuable wall space, that is an excellent source of information and can prompt independent learning, with pupils being able to access knowledge boards when they are confused or stuck on a particular problem.

This solution would still allow us to display pupil work at the back of the classroom but with this reduced board capacity, we may find that the few boards still available are needed more for aiding learning, so we could consider moving the celebration of pupil work to display boards located on the walls outside of the classroom.

Considering the purpose of the boards is key. To keep it simple I have decided to call the boards that aid learning; knowledge boards, and the boards that display pupil work; celebration boards. In this option I am still going to propose that celebration boards should be outside the classroom, one reason is cognitive load, but another is that it also allows us to celebrate pupils' achievements more widely with pupils, teachers and visitors who may not enter our classrooms. The rest of the boards in the classroom will be knowledge boards, and although their content can be decided by the teacher it is important to remember that each board should play an important role in our teaching and learning across the year.

Each board should play an important role in our teaching and learning across the year

Using this solution, I am not going to remove any of the boards from the classroom. Instead I am going to simply add a blind to each board and when the knowledge boards do not relate to the learning taking place in the classroom, they will have the blinds pulled down, so that the content is covered, and hence we are reducing the extrinsic load on our pupils and are actively helping to reduce their potential cognitive load.

Essentially, I am intentionally trying to create giant knowledge organisers across my classroom for the core content that I am teaching, so that my knowledge boards are not a distraction but a learning aid that can support thinking and problem solving in my lessons.



Creating teacher ready classrooms

I appreciate that some colleagues, teach multiple subjects, key stages or mixed year groups and that it may not be possible to create giant knowledge organisers for all subjects and topics, which is why you are best placed to decide on how to allocate your boards to the areas that you think are the most important or most challenging.

We could take this option, one step further, helping to save time and foster collaboration between colleagues. This would, however, involve allocating classrooms to key stages and year groups as opposed to teachers.

For example, in a primary setting a classroom would be allocated as a Year 1 classroom and in a secondary setting where there are multiple classrooms in a department, they could be allocated to Key Stage 3. Teachers across the phase groups and key stages could work together to identify the core knowledge for their knowledge boards and together create these boards in each classroom.



How would this work?

In a primary setting, a Year 1 class teacher would be in a classroom designated to Year 1 and all the knowledge boards in this classroom would directly relate to Year 1 content, if they are then asked to teach Year 2 in the following year, they would move to a classroom designated for Year 2, where all the knowledge boards would relate to Year 2, and as long as these boards have been created collaboratively by the phase teachers in the school, they are essentially walking into classrooms, that are teacher ready.

This could also be applied to large departments in secondary schools, although it would be slightly more complicated, as teachers can deliver content across different key stages daily and would therefore have to be prepared to move to key stage specific room, where necessary. Alternatively careful timetabling could result in teachers being allocated predominantly to key stage 3 or 4 classes to minimise movement, which incidentally would also result in teachers having an opportunity to become phase specific experts in the content they deliver.

The classroom clock

I am sure most of you know what I am going to say!

Well, you do actually have three options, the most obvious is to move the clock to the back of the classroom, so it is your line of sight, as opposed to the line of sight of the pupils. This is particularly important if you have an analogue clock face, as children may still be learning to tell the time, and so if they are concentrating on trying to tell the time, this will present significant cognitive load for them.

Or alternatively you could replace your analogue clock face with a digital clock, as the latter does not require as much concentration and so does not carry the same cognitive load as the analogue clock. This however does seem a little counterintuitive, if children need to practice learning how to tell the time, so I would recommend you keep the analogue clock face but place it at the back of the classroom.

Finally, there is always the option to just remove the clock! Again, this doesn't really help with learning to tell the time, but it does remove this cognitive load from the classroom.

So, keep the analogue clock face but place it at the back of the classroom!



Windows

If a pupil is staring out of the window or is distracted by something going on outside, then they are not very likely to be able to attend to what is going on in the classroom, and hence any information, or instruction that you are delivering is very unlikely to reach their working memory. One way you can remove this environmental distraction, is by shutting all the curtains or pulling down all the blinds and turning on the light. Personally, I don't like the idea of all our pupils sitting in gloomy rooms, with no natural light, so we have to think of other options.

Perhaps you are fortunate enough to have bottom-up blinds in your classroom, if so, you can easily solve this problem just by pulling up the blinds so that they cover the bottom third of the window. Café curtains are a similar alternative, as they cover the bottom part of the window, but an even more affordable solution would be to use some frosted window film. All three of these solutions will still allow lots of natural light, so it is possible to remove a potential environmental distraction, whilst still keeping your classrooms bright and welcoming.

In this article I have presented just three potential visual environmental distractors that can impact on pupils working memory, but this is not an exhaustive list, and you may find many more within your own classrooms.

If you have found this interesting and want to know more about cognitive load, then click on the link below to discover more about our course into memory and cognition:

[Memory and Cognition | Wonder Learning Partnership \(wlp.education\)](https://wlp.education)



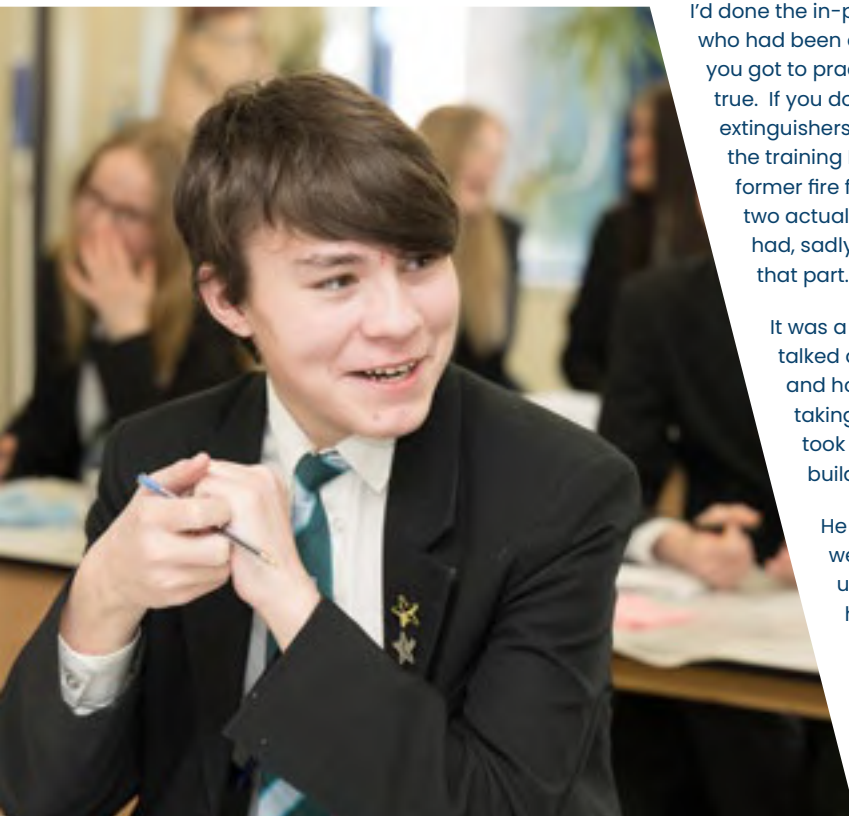
Why do Wonder sequence their curriculum and assessment around key prerequisites?

I'm sorry if you've heard me tell this story before but – even if you have – please stay with me. If not just for the curriculum conversation, then in case there's something in this article that might save your life – though I hope you are never in a position to have to use it. I am sorry if you find the first part upsetting.

Some time ago, I completed some online training on fire safety. It was a short video and then a series of questions. The training was passed if you answered more than a certain amount correctly.



Gareth Davies
Trust Head of Curriculum
and Assessment



I'd done the in-person training and been a fire warden before. People who had been on it before told me it was memorable, difficult, but that you got to practice using real fire extinguishers. All of these things are true. If you do the course, you go out and practice using some fire extinguishers (and yes, that sounds quite amusing). However, of all the training I've done, it was some of the most difficult. Our trainer – a former fire fighter – showed us pictures, videos, and maps detailing two actual fires in packed public places in which a number of people had, sadly, not survived. That was memorable. I will never forget that part.

It was a course for schools and businesses and so naturally he talked about the practical circumstances that caused the fire and how they could be avoided by institutions and organisations taking appropriate steps. However, more upsettingly, he also took us through the decisions that the individual people in the building made after the fire had started.

He told us the things that some people did that meant they were able to survive and the things that others did that unfortunately meant they did not. This course was six hours long and it was very difficult but at the end of it, I was a fully accredited fire warden for a year. I didn't just have the certificate. I took it seriously.

So, years later I find myself about to take a short course on fire safety. At the end of it I won't be a fire warden again – my certificate has lapsed – but it will give me the key information I need to stay safe at work. I note the video is much less than an hour long. Before I press play, I wonder what the content will be? I try to think back to my full-day fire warden course and try to think what the key content should be. What were the vital points? What will they test us on to know we've understood the basics?

I try to think what I would put as the key material. It would definitely include the following pieces of information.

1. **Get out – the right way.** When we hear a fire alarm sounding in a crowded place, it can cause panic. When panicking, we don't think clearly and that's a problem because in such circumstances we need to leave the building calmly. For many people under panic, they default to retracing their steps and going back out of a space the same way they came in. Sometimes in these situations people will actually walk past emergency exits and other escape routes because they are following a crowd and think that by going back the way they came; they are doing the right thing. The correct thing to do – especially in an unfamiliar place – is to notice the nearest emergency exit to you and perhaps draw attention to it for others. For children they can learn this by practicing evacuations. It is why fire drills are so important. And leave bags and belongings behind. This is common sense because it means you can move more easily – so it seems like it is a way to ensure your personal safety.

However, what you need to know is that it is particularly important when you get to a doorway because these can cause people to trip or get struck and that can quickly block an exit completely as people clamber over and onto each other. So, it's not about your personal safety – it's about the safety of everyone else. Just leave it. Things are not important.

2. **Don't go back in.** You can't beat a fire by putting a wet cloth over your mouth or by holding your breath. Smoke in a domestic or commercial fire contains toxins that are highly poisonous. In addition, the heat will be utterly unbearable. Get out. Once you are out, stay out.
3. **Stop, drop and roll.** I once caught on fire myself and can tell you this does work. It's counter-intuitive because the impulse is actually to run – as though in that panicking moment you can get away from the fire that is on your clothes. However, you absolutely do need to stop, drop, and roll.
4. **Only use a fire extinguisher if the fire is between you and an exit – and if you're going to do that, use the right type.** If you try to put an electrical fire out with a water fire extinguisher, the water can conduct the electricity, and you will be electrocuted. Water on a fat fire will make it worse. Using a CO2 extinguisher in a confined space is dangerous as it can take out the oxygen. Also check the date on fire extinguishers regularly. If you have one, great – but it won't do any good if it doesn't work. We check the dates on milk regularly, after all. While we might say a nice cup of tea is a "life saver," it's not actually a life saver.
5. **Don't let a fire start to begin with.** Things in buildings are mostly very, very dry. They are not natural environments. While it might be hard to light a campfire Bear-Grylls-style in the woods, that's because even on a dry day there will be moisture from the soil, the air, living timber, and so on. Things in buildings are off the ground. They are not rained on. They are dried continually by central heating. They will burn more easily. So be very careful where you place heat sources and do not leave them unattended. Also – without being too paranoid – be careful of things that can act like lenses and magnify sunlight. They showed us a fire that started like that.



Not all Knowledge is Created Equal

So, before I pressed play, that's what I expected. I got some of that. However, I also got questions about the names of regulations and dates of legislation. There's nothing wrong with that – it is important that employees know they are protected by particular legal obligations. But is that the most important thing for an employee to know? In other words, did the teaching prioritise the things that would actually make a difference to preventing and surviving a fire?

Then came the assessment. Three answers wrong would mean the test needed to be retaken. In Mathematics GCSE this year, a child could pass by achieving around fifty percent and we're always telling children how vital mathematics is – which it is. So, a pass rate of eighty five percent is tough but rightfully so given that this is a lifesaving topic.

However, one of the questions asked, "what is the right thing to put on a fat fire to extinguish it." It let you respond with 'water.' Another asked what should be done when a fire alarm sounds. One answer you were permitted to give for that one was 'nothing.'

Both of those things could kill you, but I noted it was still possible to get both wrong and still pass. Curious, I looked back at the other questions. Some other questions had a life-threatening element or highlighted the actions that could prevent a fire altogether. However, some were asking colleagues to recall fairly obscure facts about health and safety law. Appropriate challenge for me as a former fire warden, but even so if I have not committed that to memory and I need to know it, I can always look it up. Some things, however, should be remembered so that they become automatic.

When making assessments of any kind and in any topic, due consideration should be made to the fact that not all knowledge is created equal. Some skills and knowledge are generative or foundational and must be understood for children to move on – these need to be tested regularly but they also need to be reported directly and often.

Prioritising and Highlighting Vital Points is Key

All of this is a very dramatic answer to the question – **why do Wonder sequence their curriculum and assessment around key prerequisites?** The answer is because prioritising and highlighting the vital points is our responsibility. It is how we build learners who achieve the highest because they have obtained mastery and automaticity of foundational knowledge. It is how we are closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. It is how we ensure great progress for pupils with special educational needs.

Why do I choose such a dramatic example? And why do I tell it so often? Even when colleagues roll their eyes and say, 'not this again...'? The answer is because **information that is essential and needs to be at our fingertips should be repeated** and our curriculum plans should reflect this. We should relish the opportunity to make links to it, develop it, and test it. In fact, that's literally the meaning of revision. Re – again, Vision – seeing. **Seeing again.** We should find memorable, innovative ways of securing and returning to important things.

Speaking of which, I'm sorry if you've heard me tell this story before but – even if you have – please stay with me. If not for the curriculum conversation, then just in case there's something in this article that might save your life – though I hope you are never in a position to have to use it. I am sorry if you find the first part upsetting.

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People & Culture

Updates to the Employment Rights Bill

On the 10th of October 2024, the Labour government passed the highly anticipated 'Employment Rights Bill'. The bill aims to tackle poor working conditions and promote economic growth - benefitting businesses and workers alike.

There are numerous legislative changes that the Employment Rights Bill 2024 proposes. The majority of the proposals will be subject to parliamentary debate and public consultation and are likely to be implemented during the next couple of years.

Peninsular Business have explained some of the legislative changes as follows:

Ban on exploitative zero-hour contracts

The bill states employers will no longer use zero-hour contracts that exploit or mistreat workers. You must provide them with contracts that reflect regular work patterns. Employers are also obliged to give reasonable notice and compensation for any shift changes or cancellations these workers face.

End 'fire and rehire' schemes

The bill puts a stop to 'fire and rehire' and 'fire and replace' schemes. Instead, the Labour government will provide effective methods to replace inadequacies from the previous government's statutory code on dismissal and re-engagement.

Introduce basic workers' rights from day one

Workers to receive numerous statutory rights from the first day on their job. This can range from parental leave rights to protection from unfair dismissal. Day-one rights apply irrespective of their status, position, or pay under the new bill.

Extend probation periods

Probation periods to be extended from the previous length; and new hires have access to this from first day. The bill highlights that employers must conduct proper assessments on their employees' suitability for a role, as well as reassure them of their day-one rights.



Provide sick pay rights for workers

Statutory sick pay rights are to be available for workers. The government will remove the lower earnings limit and waiting period requirements for the payment. The law also ensures a fair earnings replacement for those who earn below the current sick pay rate.

Better flexible working arrangements

Workers already now have the right to request flexible working arrangements from their first day of employment. (Employees can also make two requests per year). Employers must respond to requests within two months of receiving them. And they can only deny a request if it falls within one or more of the eight statutory reasons.

Promote the right to switch off

The bill promotes the right to switch off from work. Employers will no longer be able to make unnecessary communication with employees outside their working hours. The focus here is to establish better work-life balance for all staff members. It also looks into promoting sufficient rest periods between workdays.

Legal protection for pregnant women

New mothers now have legal protection from dismissal for at least six months of them returning to work. The bill also looks into providing better support for employees going through the menopause at work, whatever stage this may be.

Establish new Fair Work Agency

The government will establish a new Single Enforcement Body called the 'Fair Work Agency'. This strategy aims to strengthen the enforcement of statutory employment rights across all business industries.

Better pay in adult social care

The bill sets to improve salary rates in the adult social care sector. After appropriate reviews, the government will assess how these changes perform and apply them to relevant care area.

Reinstate School Support Staff Negotiating Body

The bill will reinstate the 'School Support Staff Negotiating Body'. The scheme will introduce national terms and conditions for schools, build career progression pathways, and provide fairer salaries to support staff.

Update trade union laws

The bill presents updates on trade union legislation - aligning them with current economic needs. This includes removing unnecessary restrictions on trade union activity, like minimum service for new employees. The bill also ensures better industrial relations between businesses and staff; and looks into areas like negotiations and bargaining.

The Bill does not specify a 'commencement date' when its provisions will come into force, and it is likely that implementation will be 'staggered' with various

**Leila Sugden, Trust Assistant
Director of People and Culture**



Governance

Estates Management

The role of those governing is to maintain strategic oversight which ensures that the estate is being managed properly and that buildings and grounds are safe, sustainable, and an efficient use of resources.

NGA's estates management guides are available for those governing in multi academy trusts (MATs) and single schools (maintained schools and single academy trusts).

The guides cover:

- » building knowledge of the estate and setting performance measures
- » organisational capacity – ensuring staff have the right skills and knowledge
- » strategic planning – key documents boards should review
- » managing resources – budget monitoring, procurement and efficiency
- » ensuring compliance – inspections, health and safety and risk management
- » questions that governors and trustees might ask

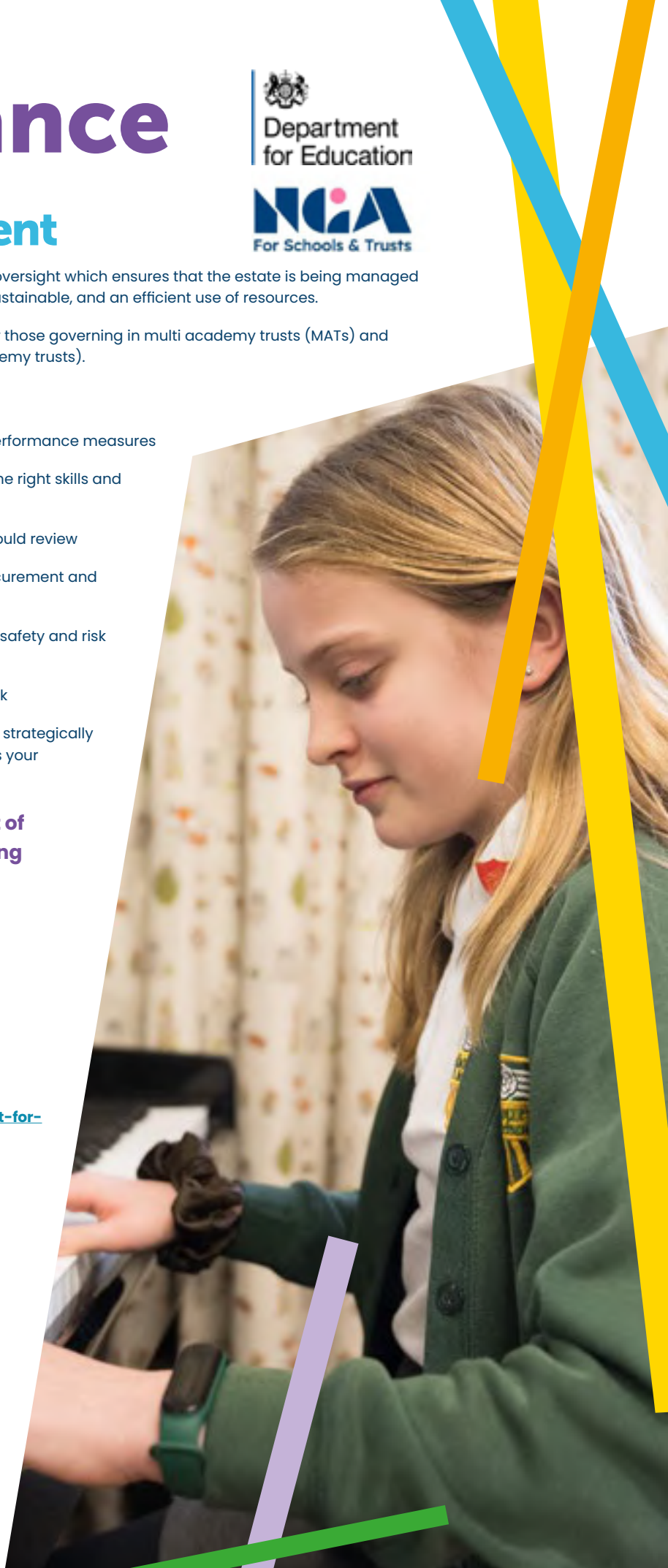
The Department for Education (DfE) advises thinking strategically about your estate will make sure the estate supports your educational goals.

To support the strategic management of the estate you should have the following documents:

- » estate vision
- » estate strategy
- » asset management plan
- » strategic review process

You can learn more here:

www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools





Safeguarding and Dangerous Dogs

Credit: North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

What are the concerns regarding dogs when working with children and families?

Having a dog can have physical and emotional benefits for a child and their family. Animals such as dogs and cats can also help teach children and young people about responsibility and caring for living creatures. However, a number of children and adults of different ages have been seriously injured or have died from attacks by dogs in recent years.

The BBC identified that in the UK, there has been an annual increase in dog attacks since 2018, with a 21% increase in reported dog attacks between 2022 – 2023.

There have been a number of cases reported in the press where people, both children and adults have been severely injured and killed by certain breeds of dog. **According to the Dog's Trust, up to 91% of dog bites to children happen in the home with a dog they know.**

Dogs are pack animals and have a natural instinct to protect their families. They are normally protective of their environment and owners and some dogs may be aggressive towards professionals visiting their homes or places they consider their territory.

What legislation exists to control dangerous dogs?

The Dangerous Dogs Act (1991) recognises that:

- » Any dog can be 'dangerous' (as defined by The Act) if it has already been known to inflict or threaten injury
- » A dog can also be defined as "dangerously out of control" by the Act: "... a dog shall be regarded as dangerously out of control on any occasion on which there are grounds for reasonable apprehension that it will injure any person or assistance dog, whether or not it actually does so"
- » Certain dogs are 'prohibited' and if any agency has any knowledge or report of a dog of this type, the matter should be reported to the police immediately.



The Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 also extended the remit of Dangerous Dogs Act.

What breeds of dogs are prohibited?

Certain dogs are prohibited under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and if any agency has any knowledge or report of a dog of this type, **the matter should be reported to the police immediately.**

Prohibited breeds are defined by the Act as “any dog of the type known as Pit Bull Terrier, the Japanese Tosa, the Dogo Argentino and the Fila Brasileiro”.

XL Bullies have also been banned in the UK after several serious attacks and a fatality involving the breed.

What do I need to consider when carrying out my role?

As part of any visit or assessment, practitioners should:

- » Consider whether the presence of the dog(s) presents any kind of risk to the welfare of the children
- » Consider their own safety and that of their colleagues that the dog(s) may represent
- » Discuss with the parents or the pet owner, the dog’s behaviour and identify any risks to the children
- » Make it clear in the referral that they have had a specific conversation with the family about the dog and they have a reason to believe the child is at risk rather than putting a referral into the police when there is a dog that is deemed to be classed as a dangerous breed without any further information.

Practitioners should proactively ask parents whether there are pets in the households they visit, and advise accordingly as follows:

- » Their children should never be left alone with a dog, even their own.
- » Their children should be supervised when they are with a pet. If the animal looks unhappy, remove them to somewhere they feel safe.
- » Never allow their children to approach an animal they don’t know

How do I keep myself safe when working with a family with dog(s)?

Staff who are required to visit families at home may find themselves in the presence of animals which are an unknown quantity. Your safety is paramount. Consider the following approaches when conducting visits to families with pets:

- » Before beginning work with a family, review any information available on the family records to aid the completion of a risk assessment before entering a family home.
- » Remember to consider the presence of pets (particularly dogs) as a potential risk in family households, and factor in the fact that young, non-mobile and disabled children may be unable to alter their behaviour around an animal as part of a risk assessment.
- » Advise that children should never be left alone with dogs and consider whether appropriate resources can be passed on to the family.
- » Dogs can potentially be used to intimidate members of staff. If you have any concerns prior to a visit, consider calling ahead to ask for the dog to be put away in a secure place such as the kitchen or garden.
- » If you encounter a dangerous or aggressive dog, you can report the animal to the police.
- » Not all Professionals are expected to be able to identify dangerous dogs. If you are unsure whether a dog is dangerous, raise your concerns with your line manager to discuss next steps.
- » Consider sharing information with other agencies who may visit the home if you consider a dog to be unsafe.





Online Training and School Improvement Resources

We have a range of individual courses on offer in addition to annual subscription packages where you can choose from a catalogue of continual professional development (CPD) to suit your school's training needs. If you require further information on any of the courses or packages available, please do get in touch.

Wonder Learning Partnership is pleased to be working in partnership with TT Education to bring you Live Stream Courses and a suite of School Improvement Resources.

Upcoming Online Events 2024

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29 November	Twilight Online Meeting	Updates on the new Ofsted Framework	3.30pm-5pm	£20+VAT
5 December	Breakfast Online Meeting	Updates on the new Ofsted Framework	9am-10.30am	£20+VAT
10 December	Twilight Meeting	Updates on the new Ofsted Framework	3.30pm-5pm	£20+VAT
12 December	Online Course	Adaptive Practise in Teaching and Learning	12pm-3pm	£119.20+VAT
12 December	Online Course	Building Pupil Resilience	3.30pm-4.30pm	£60+VAT

Book a course:

www.wlp.education/ioe-courses/



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Book a course:

www.wip.education/ioe-courses/

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