

Thu 18/06/26

Dear Colleagues,

SLT Meet Up

At this time of year, the Senior Leadership Team reviews progress and considers how we adapt our programmes and priorities in response to performance and the wider environment. As a team, we have taken focused time together to reflect carefully on last year's performance, current bookings, and a range of other key factors. We have updated our assumptions and are working to shape a clear and resilient plan for the organisation. During two days at Preston Montford, our focus has been on ensuring we are building an organisation that is not only sustainable, but able to thrive in the years ahead. We will be taking this plan to the Board in July, which will inform the development of our future business plan and budget. I will share further highlights and more detail with you in the staff newsletter shortly.

Policy Announcements

Anyone would think there was an election on. There has been a London bus style procession of welcome announcements - even on a Friday which hints at a behind the scenes scramble- but there is some good news.

The GCSE in Natural History

After 8 years of our involvement, the [new GCSE in Natural History](#) consultation come out on Friday. With only a few hours' notice we turned the social media and [press release](#) content round quickly and our posts have seen one of the largest responses ever.

There are 12 weeks for Jo and Joy to craft our response, and we will be seeking input from others too including our Youth Panel and wider sector. Fieldwork is a significant part of the GCSE and government make a very clear link between the qualification and the much-needed skills it can develop in the light of the Milburn Review. This helps ground the subject as a science with real, tangible and vocational benefits, not merely a niche hobby. There is a lot of good in the content, but we will suggest some changes to make it even better.

It said the early pioneers were somewhat airbrushed out of the announcement, particularly Mary Colwell who kicked the whole thing off and then relentlessly pursued it. However, she has been rightly recognised elsewhere with an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours for services to nature and better environmental education. I've written to congratulate her.

Every Child Can

Next up came the "[Every Child Can](#)" Programme and this provides more details on the provision of "enrichment activities" already announced in both the Curriculum and Assessment Review and Youth Strategy. It was timed to offer alternatives to social media by focussing on reducing online isolation and building connections using the £132m Dormant Assets Fund, but there's a strong theme of equality of opportunity. Ofsted will report on a school's enrichment offer. More details are to follow but the five categories are below and there is considerable overlap with what we currently offer, including through +Adventure.

- civic engagement
- arts and culture
- nature, outdoor and adventure

- life and future skills including STEM
- sport and physical activities.

Use of AI Survey

The AI working group appreciate the responses so far from staff for the survey, thank you. We would like all surveys completed by 19 June so if you would still like to share your views, please go to the link- [AI Survey for Field Studies Council employees](#)

Even if you don't use AI in your role, we would still like to gather your views. Thank you again for your input.

Margam MS Visit

Siân welcomed local Senedd Member Huw Irranca-Davies for a centre visit on Friday. He's been a long serving member in several roles including leading on climate change in the previous parliament. He now chairs the business committee but indicated a willingness to look again at residentials for all. Pictured with Councillor Laura Williams and staff members Amanda and Siân.



Special Mention

This week sees a double anniversary in the Finance Team Office with Kate Chesshire and Chris Price clocking up 21 and 20 years with Field Studies Council respectively. We know that correlation is not causation, but that office is well known for the very high quality of coffee and snacks as well as long serving staff members. Congratulations to them both.

Welcome to Field Studies Council

Stephen Chadd has joined the team at Amersham as Tutor

Nancy Lund has joined the team at Juniper Hall as Hospitality and Catering Assistant.

Best regards

Mark