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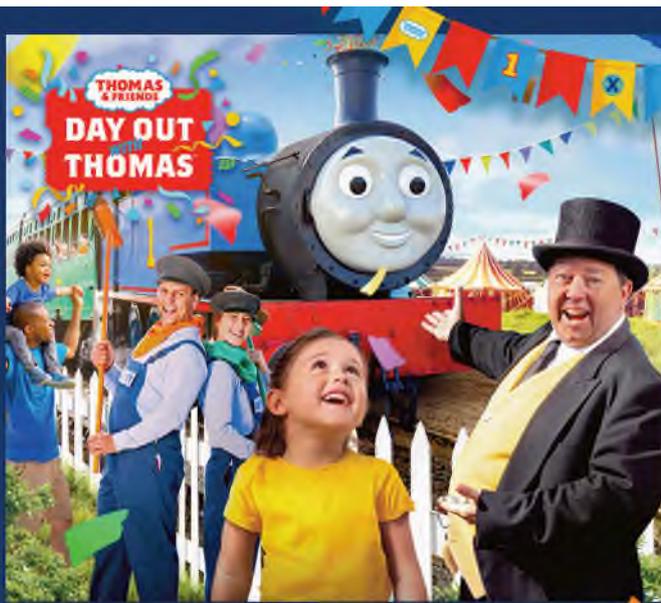
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A word from the editor

At the time of writing, the sun is shining and the temperature reminds us of holidays in Southern Europe. They say that if spring is warm, summer won't be—but we're keeping our fingers crossed and getting ready for a long summer break.

We're on the lookout for camps and classes to keep our children busy while we're still working, organising everything for that long-awaited family holiday—whether it's at home or abroad. And of course, we're also exploring options for schools and nurseries for the new academic year. It's all in this edition of the magazine: get advice from the Travelogue, mark school open days in your diary, and sign up for the best summer activities for your child—whether it's science, drama, or sport.

But first things first—are you ready for Father's Day? Check out our gift guide. Whether he loves a bit of adventure or prefers staying put in front of his computer, we hope you'll find the perfect gift to make his day special.

Here's to a wonderful Father's Day, a long-awaited holiday, and a fantastic summer—whatever the weather! **Zoe x**

The M&D Out and About listings are always carefully selected to offer our readers useful information. Although every effort is made to ensure that information is correct M&D cannot be held liable for any errors or omissions. We strongly advise you to check details with the event organisers.

Editor **Zoe Drobnis** Art Editor **David Aldred**

Issue 88 Summer 2025

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visit www.mums-dads.co.uk



Father's Day gift guide by Alena Chalmovska



An experience to remember

Ever felt the urge to throw your husband off a tall building? Now you can - legally and safely - thanks to the Anfield Abseil. This exhilarating experience lets visitors abseil from the top of Liverpool FC's iconic stadium. Open to fans of any club - yes, even Manchester United - or just thrill-seekers who aren't even interested in football, this unique adventure begins 30 metres up, offering stunning city views before the plunge from the Main Stand's roof. Expert instructors provide all the safety gear and guidance - though they might joke that Evertonians get one rope and United fans a crash mat.

Whether you're a Liverpool fan or an adventure enthusiast, it's a unique way to experience this legendary stadium, and if your other half really, really can't bring himself to have anything to do with Liverpool FC then there are similar experiences run by the same company - Wire and Sky - at Tottenham Hotspur and Cardiff's Principality Stadium.

Available for **£45** from Liverpool FC's website and Virgin Experience Days.

The perfect gift from Mom to POP

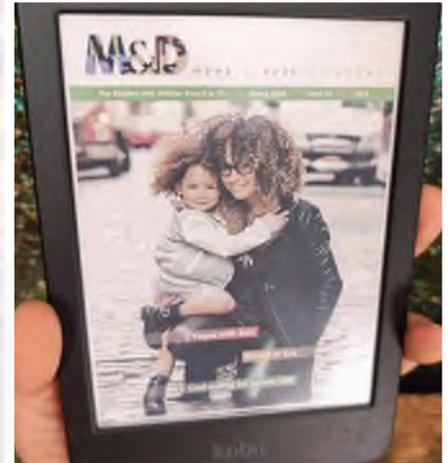
The only things worse than wired keyboards, in my humble opinion, are those wireless keyboards with the USB dongle. Not only do they take up a precious USB port, but there's the ever-present danger of losing the dongle, especially if it's being used on more than one device. Bluetooth keyboards like the POP Icons Keys from Logitech remove all these annoying issues, and look stylish at the same time. No dongle

required, and can be paired with up to three devices - perfect for multitaskers. Compatible with Windows, Android and iOS, it switches between devices at the push of a button. You can also customise Keys to open apps or websites using Logitech's Logi Options+ app. Priced at **£46.99** on Amazon at the time of writing.

Never judge an e-reader by its cover, judge it by its colour

Kobo continues to rival Kindle with smart features like OverDrive library borrowing and a huge e-book store. The Kobo Clara Colour is a great pick for book-loving dads. At an astonishingly light 174g, and only around 16cm long, it's just as easy to take on the train to work or on holiday as it is to read in bed or the bath; and who doesn't like to read in the bath? It's completely waterproof, so you don't have to worry about dropping it, if you agree with me on this point. It's in colour e-ink thought where Kobo really shines. Thanks to the colour display you can enjoy your favourite magazines or graphic novels as they were meant to be read, rather than the dull gray-scale of other e-ink readers. The Kobo Clara Colour's screen is

very similar to reading from paper, so he'll be able to read for hours on end without the eye fatigue that comes from LCD displays on phones or tablets. At **£149.99** it's also great value for a colour e-ink reader, and £120 cheaper than the Kindle Coloursoft equivalent. What's not to love?



The sky's the limit

While Manchester is lucky enough to have its fair share of flight simulator experiences available, it can be expensive to take this up as a hobby. Why fork out for pricey flight simulator days when the Microsoft Flight Simulator 2024 lets Dad soar from home? It is one of the most realistic and immersive flight simulators available. The simulator boasts groundbreaking graphics, realistic flight physics, and real-world weather conditions, allowing players to fly a wide variety of aircraft across a meticulously recreated globe.

What sets the Microsoft Flight Simulator apart from other simulators is its use of satellite data and cloud technology to generate real-world terrain and cities. This means players can explore any corner of the earth. It's available as a stand-alone purchase for the Xbox or PC, or free on the Xbox Game Pass. You don't even need an Xbox or high-end PC either if you chose the Game Pass option, as Xbox cloud gaming will allow it to run on even the most modest of laptops. Be warned though, my husband and son have become addicted to flying together, so you might see a little less of Dad for a couple of months after Father's Day.

Available to download for **£55.99** or free with a Game Pass Ultimate or PC Game Pass subscription.



POP Icons Keys



Microsoft Flight Simulator

Take a summer holiday to outer space at Jodrell Bank!



Ready to blast off your summer? Based in the heart of the beautiful Cheshire countryside, Jodrell Bank Centre for Engagement - home of the UK's largest radio telescope and UNESCO World Heritage Site - is an unforgettable day out for astronauts of all ages.

Prepare to engage the next generation of rocket scientists in the brand new **Rocket Lab**, where little space explorers can get hands-on with stomp and air powered rockets and be wowed by the 'whoosh bottle' demonstration.

For those looking to make the most of Jodrell Bank's scenic grounds, their site trail invites you on a mission across space and time to locate cosmic entities, from black holes and comets to planets and astronauts!

Plus, get stuck in at Jodrell's space craft station, have your burning questions about the universe answered by the friendly team of science buskers, and let little imaginations (and energy!) run wild on the playground.

Meet The Telescope is your exclusive chance to get up close with

the iconic Lovell Telescope! This Grade I listed giant is a beacon on the Cheshire skyline, and in these bitesize outdoor sessions, you'll uncover its secrets through fun facts for the whole family! If you're hungry for more, don't miss the daily **Telescope Talk** sit-down show.

For those who dream of touching the stars, the planetarium-style Space Dome provides immersive films such as **Ted's Space Adventure**, an introduction to wonderous worlds perfect for preschoolers and packed with music and rhyme.

Families can also enjoy picturesque picnic spots, refuel at the two locally-sourced cafes, and explore Jodrell's award-winning shop bursting with souvenirs and spacesuits...

Best of all - every ticket is now an annual pass, meaning you can return as many times as you like for 12 months at no extra cost. Remember to book online to save an extra 10% on admission.



SciTech 2025

In 1991, fifty children attended the first SciTech Science Holiday Club. It was so well received that, in 1992, SciTech moved to Manchester Metropolitan University, where they reached a capacity of 300 children. The enthusiastic engagement of children in science and technology had begun.

The success of the SciTech approach meant that, in subsequent years, the summer schools not only delivered spectacular hands-on science experiences to audiences in Manchester but also expanded across Europe, Canada, Vietnam, and South Africa.

During the holidays, a different subject is covered each day. With 55 subjects ranging from animation to zoology, there is no shortage of amazing science to keep active minds engaged - earning SciTech the accolade of "a Holiday Club like no other."

This year's programme:

- **Fire & Ice** - Exciting demonstrations and hands-on experiments, from -196°C to $2,400^{\circ}\text{C}$.
- **Formula 1** - Explore the science behind the car and discover the unusual job of an F1 car's wing.
- **Senses** - Do you think we have just five senses? Think again and find out how the brain uses over 30 sensors.
- **Water** - One of the most common chemicals, but with some very unusual properties.
- **Robotics** - Program robots to balance on two wheels.



Scan here to find out more about the course



Scan here to go to the booking form

National Trust

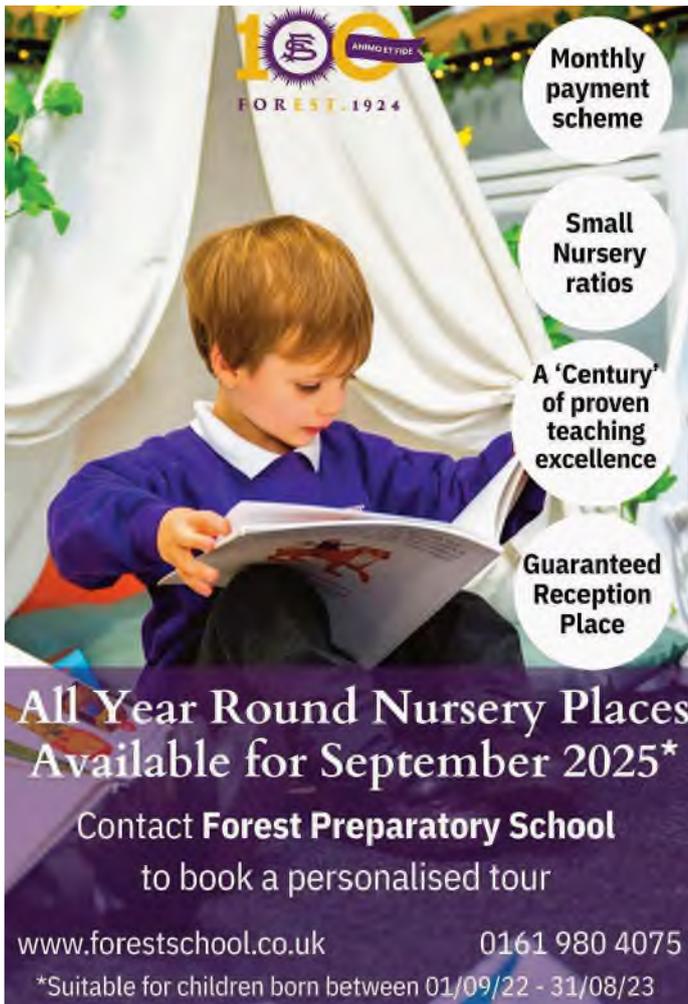
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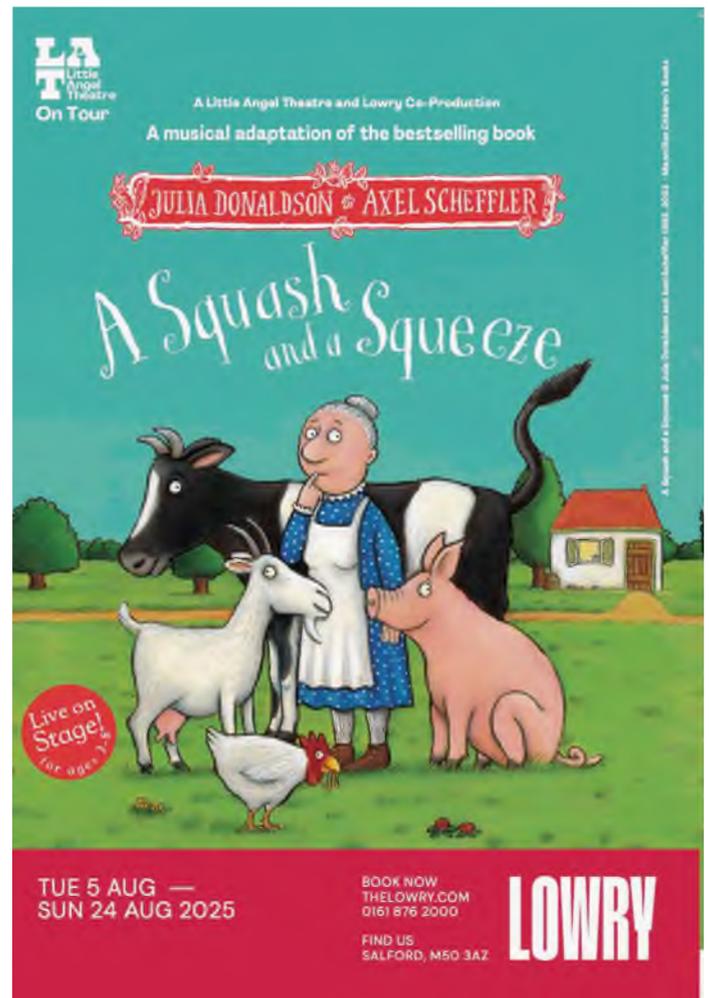
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Eco journey at Manchester Montessori House

by Sylwia Zywojko, founder and Managing Director of MMH nursery



At Manchester Montessori House, the 2024 - 2025 academic year has been rooted in a theme central to our values: ecology and sustainability. Caring for the environment has long been part of our ethos, and this year, we've woven it deeply into our curriculum through meaningful, hands-on experiences.



Litter and Responsibility

We began by exploring litter and environmental cleanliness. Children joined community litter picks using equipment provided by the local library and Biffa, and rescued sea creatures from 'polluted' sensory trays - activities that built empathy, coordination, and a sense of responsibility. We introduced recycling songs, set up a classroom recycling station, and ran a community stall at Manley Park to raise awareness about keeping our waterways clean.

Harvest: Nature's Gifts

In September, we celebrated the harvest, exploring food origins, life cycles, and seasonal produce. The children planted fruits and vegetables, used them in art and counting games, and shared them during snack time - developing gratitude for nature and an appreciation for healthy eating.

The 5 Rs: Rethinking Waste



Through junk modelling, a swap shop for clothes and toys, and water filtering experiments, children began to understand how to reduce waste. We introduced the 5 Rs - Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle - and children learned to ask, "Can I recycle this yogurt pot?" These small moments lay the foundation for lifelong sustainable habits.

Air Quality and Transport

Children explored the concept of air pollution through art, songs, and a Clean Air Picnic in partnership with a local charity. We discussed transport choices, encouraging families to walk, scoot, or cycle. The children even helped promote green travel by making posters with our Eco Committee and going on local walks to observe sustainable infrastructure.

Healthy Living and the Planet

We linked healthy living with environmental care. Children enjoyed plant-based snacks, participated in outdoor obstacle courses, and discussed how what we eat and how we move affects both our bodies and the Earth. Movement, rest, and mindful choices were explored as essential parts of well-being and sustainability.

Biodiversity in Our Garden



The children played a key role in re-designing our garden, creating zones for flowers, herbs, vegetables, a pond, bug hotel, and bird box. Inspired by the shape of a tree, the layout supports a range of learning experiences. Highlights included observing the life cycles of frogs and butterflies, making bird feeders, and learning about bees through honey tasting.



Water and Oceans

Children discovered the water cycle, clean water access, and conservation through practical tasks like filtering water, collecting rainwater, and washing clothes outdoors. They also explored ocean ecosystems and the threat of pollution through sensory play and storytelling.

Energy and Electricity-Free Days

We held an electricity-free day, using fire to prepare food and relying on natural light. This powerful experience helped children understand our dependence on energy and how we can use it more consciously.

Global Citizenship and Compassion

A major milestone in our eco journey was learning about global responsibility. The children adopted a turtle through a sponsored walk, proudly raising awareness while singing eco-songs in the park. It was a joyful way to connect their actions to the wider world.

Dr. Montessori said, "The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, 'The children are now working as if I did not exist.'" This year, we've seen our children show genuine independence, compassion, and care for the world around them. By integrating ecology into everyday life - how we eat, travel, play, and learn - we hope to nurture not only knowledge, but a lifelong love for the Earth and all who share it. Every planted seed, every rescued sea creature, every recycled item has been a step toward a brighter, greener future - one child at a time.

Dr. Maria Montessori believed there is no substitute for real-life experiences in nature. She said, 'There is no description, no image in any book that is capable of replacing the sight of real trees, and all the life to be found around them, in a real forest.' Nature, in her view, is not just a classroom - it's a source of healing, learning, and connection.

At MMH, children engage daily with the outdoors through free play, guided exploration, and our purposefully designed outdoor classrooms. Nature becomes part of the "prepared environment" - a space where learning is experiential, sensorial, and deeply rooted in the real world. As Montessori said, 'The child absorbs it... He incarnates in himself all in the world about him.'

With this in mind, we structured this year's curriculum around mini-projects exploring key ecological themes:

Guide to events

Fairs and Festivals

Experience Summer of Play



Every day this summer stories of Lyme will come to life through the world of play: let your imagination run wild in the Garden as you gallop your way from Netherfield to Meryton, and experience the locations of Pride & Prejudice through the eyes of a child. Head down to the Mill Pond to make a splash and discover the moorland, or visit the house to play with shadow puppets and recreate Thomas Legh's travels through Egypt. Lyme Park, Cheshire, Disley, Stockport SK12 2NR 01663762023 www.nationaltrust.org.uk

8 June 2025 10:00 - 16:00

Bury Brick Festival celebrates all things LEGO

This will be a great day for families, collectors, adult builders and every other kind of LEGO fan. With lots to see and do including speed building competitions, large scale displays, activities, traders selling loose bricks, new LEGO sets, retired LEGO sets, mini-figures and accessories plus a dedicated building area.

Price: Adults £7, Children £5

Castle Leisure Centre, Bolton Street, Bury BL9 0EZ www.brickfestivalevents.com

14 June 11:00 - 16:30

Universally Manchester Festival - a community day for all!

Join staff, students and community partners of the university for a jam-packed day of inspiring Bee Curious talks, hands on science activities, creative sessions, performances, and tours! From poetry to physics, music to medicine and computing to creative writing, there's loads to discover and do - with activities on offer for all ages. Explore what makes for a greener, healthier and fairer world for everyone.

University of Manchester, Oxford Rd, Manchester M13 9PL www.events.manchester.ac.uk

28 June 11:00 - 19:00

Bramhall Summer Festival

The highly anticipated Bramhall Summer Festival returns this year with a wickedly exciting theme. The Bramhall Together Trust promises an unforgettable experience for all ages!

The leafy village of Bramhall will come alive with a spectacular day filled with thrilling entertainment, mouth-watering food and drinks, and an atmosphere like no other. This year's festival, with its bold and playful 'Wicked' theme, will offer a blend of mischievous fun, magical moments, markets, food and drink stalls and memorable performances. Bramhall Village, Bramhall, SK7 1AW

29 June 11:00 - 16:00

The Vegetarian Society at COOK!

Come along to the COOK! HQ for fun demos and workshops on their Open Day. All workshops are free but registration is required. A brand new garden will be open and the team will be on site with free Veg bags to help you create great veggie dishes at home too!

Expect interactive cooking demos, children's cookery workshops, tips and tricks from the expert chefs, tastings of delicious vegetarian

dishes. Don't miss this opportunity to expand your culinary skills and discover the wonderful world of vegetarian cooking.

Follow the link to book a place on our children's workshops, Oodles of Noodles and Mini Taco Party. www.eventbrite.co.uk

28 - 29 June 11:00 - 19:00

Altrincham Festival

The grand parade is taking place on the Saturday from 11am and will be making way through the streets of Altrincham and Timperley. Then there will be two packed days on the show-ground. The Altrincham and District Festival is open for anyone!

Participants: 1st Timperley Girls' Brigade & 2nd Altrincham Boys' Brigade, 2 Vaughan Road, Altrincham WA14 5UY Tel: 07925 336254

4 - 5 July 9:30- 16:00

Autism & ADHD Show - Manchester

Are you supporting an autistic or ADHD person at home, in education or in the workplace? Are you searching for trusted information and advice? If so, the Autism & ADHD Show, formerly known as The Autism Show, can help you.

This CPD accredited programme has been designed to enable you to pick and choose the learning which is most relevant for you, whether it relates specifically to autism, ADHD or when both conditions co-occur.

Interwoven between the four theatres, one to one clinics, and practical workshops, you'll find an essential selection of specialist products and services.

Once inside the event, all content is free to access and offered on a first come, first served basis. Children aged under 16 enter free of charge when accompanied by an adult. Manchester Central, Petersfield, Manchester M2 3GX www.autismadhdshow.co.uk

6 July

Summer Concert - Little Belters and Absolute Belters

Little Belters, the children's choir for ages 4-11, has been working hard all year long, and they can't wait to showcase their vocal talents. With choirs based in Altrincham, Chorlton, and Sale, these young performers will come together to share the songs they've been perfecting. In addition Absolute Belters, the women's choirs from Altrincham and Chorlton will delight the audience with a range of beloved classics that are sure to inspire. The end-of-year concert is always a heart-warming celebration of music, where both choirs come together to perform as one, creating a truly special community. Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL www.littlebelters.co.uk

Camps & Clubs

21 June and 19 July

Outdoor Art Club

Creative activities designed to encourage children to play freely whilst exploring nature outdoors. Splash around in the water play, create a masterpiece in the mud painting studio, and produce all sorts of yucky and marvellous medicines at the potion stations. In these free, drop-in outdoor workshops, children can move around the stations in their own time, playing and exploring at their own pace in a safe and enabling environment.

The Whitworth, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M15 6ER www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk

21 July - 29 August

Outdoor holiday club

Venture Out is passionate about the outdoors: the mission is to introduce people of all ages and backgrounds to adventurous activities in Greater Manchester and the North West.

Much of activities are based at the small centre in Stockport which is by the bank of the River Mersey within the grounds of Burnage Rugby Club. It's completely outdoors, regardless of the weather. Children can come for a day, a week, multiple weeks or parts of different weeks.

A programme of activities is a mixture of team building, nature handicrafts, outdoor sports, bushcraft, forest school, nature games, canoe trips. It's a small and friendly club, where activities, timetable, staffing and supervision are especially designed to promote sociability and confidence and manage children's energy levels and welfare. Burnage Rugby Club, Battersea Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport SK4 3EA www.venture-out.co.uk

28 July - 1 August

RNCM Young Strings Summer School

Young Strings Summer School gives string players between 6 - 13 years a fantastic opportunity to develop their musical, creative and performance skills in a fun and friendly environment. Daily activities are led by a team of experienced RNCM tutors and include string orchestra, chamber music, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, choir and some creative activities.

The children are grouped according to age and experience and take part in large ensembles, chamber groups, singing, movement and improvisation/ composition activities. There are plenty of different activities throughout the day, and ample opportunities to enjoy break times outside in the garden the Mancheste Hight School for Girls. The week culminates in a concert performance.

Manchester High School for Girls, Grangethorpe Road, Manchester M14 6HS www.rncm.ac.uk

28 July - 1 August, 4 - 8 August

SciTech Holiday Club

Five days of amazing hands on science and technology. Each day your child will explore a different subject in a fun and exciting way. The young scientists will be split into the age groups so that their experience can be tailored to their ability level. If your child wants to be with a friend or sibling of different age, let the organisers know and they'll do their best to place them together. Baguley Hall School, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 1LB www.scitech.co.uk



28 July - 29 August

Kids Go Wild at Forest School

Summer holiday sessions for ages 3-11 will be completely outdoors, running in all weathers, except for high winds. The holiday club will be operating in the school's very large fit for purpose green space area. The majority of the day will be child-led play with access to some adult-led nature craft activities when they'll be able to access tunnels, slide area, swings, hammocks, play house, obstacle course. The children will be able to enjoy playing with friends in a safe and natural space with the support of the Forest School Team.

Dane Bank Green Space, 116 Windsor Road, Denton, Manchester M34 2HE www.kidsgowildforestschoool.com

13-18 August part 1 / 18-23 August part 2

Chetham's Piano Summer School - Junior Piano Courses

CIPSS (Chetham's International Piano Summer School) brings world class and legendary musicians to a vibrant, supportive community in central Manchester. Housed in the magnificent, safe grounds of the UK's largest specialist music school, this inspirational annual festival offers unprecedented facilities, including over 130 pianos and practice/ teaching rooms, the magnificent Stoller Hall, en-suite bedrooms and stunning medieval architecture juxtaposed with modern facilities. Summer School is popular not only for its content, but most importantly for its camaraderie and integration: CIPSS is waiting for everyone who adores the piano and piano playing. Children of all ages, accompanied by a parent or guardian, are welcome. www.pianosummerschool.com

For more local events and holiday clubs please visit our website.



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out and about

We should have done better

by Cat Allan

Director of Noodle
Performing Arts, Cheshire



Normally when it comes to watching popular TV shows I am very late to the party. It's a trait I've always had - I flat down refused to watch Friends because I was told I should, until I caught an episode accidentally and in time it became not just a favourite but a go to comfort watch throughout early parenthood.

Adolescence however is different. The publicity around it was huge, crediting the acting (fantastic) and the method of filming (one-take episodes), but it was the subject matter that drew me and so many in, not just because we all love a good crime drama but because this one is very real... frighteningly real and even more common than we dare to imagine. Indeed, as I took a break from the four-hour binge watch, I made a brew and listened as another teenage male arrested for a school stabbing was announced on the daytime news.

It seems crazy now, but I can't help thinking back many years to the Columbine massacre and how much we vilified the US for their dreadful gun laws, or lack of, and the need for security in schools. As someone who runs a drama school I remember my heart sinking as I heard the news of the Southport murders... not just for the victims and their families but also for the change I knew would soon happen as we were about to start our summer holiday camps. In came the Armed Intruder Response Policy which I never thought I would see. But then I never thought I would see the pandemic policies that we lived through 5 years ago.

"Is it terrorism, Sir?" asks a high school student when the general fire drill occurs in the second episode. From having lived in London between 1997

to 2004 where security threats were so commonplace it become the norm to ignore them, to having children who went to school with many friends who attended the fated Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, it feels as though our children are forced to become aware of a world filled with danger and division - no hiding it, they can see it all on their phones.

It was during Covid that I had some of my most interesting conversations with my then teenage sons, aged 13 and 15. Debates would occur in the living room, usually following the news of another rights movement - all of which, they felt, was targeted at them. #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter and the LGBTQIA+ movements all surfaced in a wave and as my eldest frustratedly pointed out to me, "You have no idea what it is to be growing up as a white male today. We are being blamed for everything."

He's right, of course. I couldn't fault his logic. I may have no idea about being a white male, but I do know that for our children now, whether male, female, preferred other, ethnic minority or neurodivergent, times are incredibly tough.

The use of phones, social media and insider code words not familiar to adults was a major theme through the series, highlighting the influence of Incel culture and popular figures such as Andrew Tate. I am familiar with the man's work - vile as I think it is - he was one of the people my sons had both seen and to some degree had identified with... I am not saying either are incels or follow him, free of the Covid four walls and now older, both are in happy social and romantic relationships. At least that's what I believe... and as the series suggests,

don't we all want to believe that our children incapable of anything but the society norms?

Eddie, the father figure, states "I should have done better," but is he taking on himself the failings of a whole society? What happened to it takes a village to raise a child? Unfortunately, I don't think most of us know our neighbours, let alone entrust them with our kids. Society is now largely online.

Australia has recently announced its intention to ban smartphones for the under 16s. It will be interesting to see how this plays out; after all, we knew no different years ago but once Pandora's Box has been opened, I don't think we can just close it again. It would, of course, mean teachers could go back to, well, teaching perhaps but in my experience once something is 'forbidden' it becomes far more interesting. Maybe that would open the door for under the radar incel behaviour, even less checked than in today's world.

So what can we do? As a drama teacher, I've noticed that the divide in our classes, especially at the pre-teen age, seems to be less pronounced than at school or elsewhere. Maybe it is because, when performing, gender, race and identity really don't matter; there are no gold medals to be won for speed or strength and the material we use tends to focus on healthy interaction. Mutual respect is what we see generally, and those that are interested in drama as an extra-curricular activity are perhaps more comfortable forming face to face relationships instead of, or as well as, online ones, giving them the much-needed social interaction and confidence that many post-Covid children lack.

I don't have all the answers, but perhaps encouraging this kind of interaction, whether through drama or other means, might keep the need for series such as Adolescence as social commentary, not just story telling, to a minimum. Incidentally, the actress playing the girl victim in the series, heard singing at the end of episode 2, was a Noodler from our Sheffield classes, and the lead child actor was a boy from The Drama MOB, another drama school based in Manchester. Perhaps we should aim for more of our children to be the performers in shows, not just the subjects. Maybe that's what we, as a community, should have done, and still could, do better.

Learning 2 learn by Dr Oksana Kiseleva



In a rapidly changing world, the ability to learn new things effectively and continuously is more valuable than any specific body of knowledge. If we want our children to succeed, we should focus not on filling them with facts, but on developing their ability to learn effectively and independently. In this sense, "learning to learn" is the motto of the best kind of education.

At the same time, it's important to recognise that, unlike the humanities, subjects like science and mathematics cannot always be self-taught. While many STEM topics at the senior school level can be studied independently, this is only possible if students have strong foundational knowledge - particularly in mathematics. These foundations must be built before children reach their mid-teen years.

As a maths tutor with years of experience, and a mother of two young adults now studying computing and engineering at university, I can confidently say it's unrealistic to expect young children to solve maths problems effectively without proper supervision. Young learners require many hours of support from both teachers and parents. However, if we teach mathematics well from an early age, more complex concepts begin to feel natural. As children grow older, gain confidence, and become more independent, adult support can be gradually reduced.

Moreover, the analytical skills children develop through learning mathematics give them a strong advantage in other subjects.

If we succeed in opening our children's minds and teaching them to think logically and creatively, they will be capable of teaching themselves anything they wish to learn in the future.

Dr Oksana Kiseleva is a regular author for M&D Magazine. She reviews maths textbooks and other educational resources, and develops her own learning material using the 'mathematics mastery' approach. You can contact her on **0161 637 4853** or via www.mums-dads.co.uk/learning-maths-together

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Leadership tips from final year students

Fiona McGrath, Phase Leader for year 5 and 6 at Bowdon Prep School, interviews year 6 students

Leadership in primary school is crucial for fostering essential life skills in young people, helping children develop confidence, responsibility, and the ability to work collaboratively with others. By taking on leadership roles, our young people learn to communicate effectively, make decisions, and solve problems creatively. These experiences not only enhance their academic performance but also prepare them for future challenges.

At BPS, every Year 6 pupil becomes part of a leadership team, which encourages them to embody our school motto - to *Believe* in themselves and their abilities, *Persevere* through challenges, and *Succeed* in their endeavours. Our leadership program is deeply rooted in our three values:

- Care - care for all
- Curriculum - commitment to excellence
- Community - working together

We asked three of our Year 6 Leaders to share their leadership tips, based on their experience at the school. Jessie represented the Friendship Captains (Care), Nikki spoke on behalf of the Art Captains (Curriculum), and Penelope sits on the School Council (Community).

Q What do you think are the qualities of a good leader?

• *Jessie*: I think it's about having good listening skills and patience but then knowing when to take the lead. A good leader looks to use everyone's different strengths and encourages teamwork.

• *Penelope*: I agree about good listening skills; it's showing kindness by demonstrating that everyone is heard and feels valued. I also think confidence and courage are important; people need to believe in you and you must stand up for what is right.

• *Nikki*: Good leaders are people who aren't afraid to stand up for themselves or their peers; they have the ability to set clear goals and are effective in articulating ideas and inspiring others.

Q What have you enjoyed about your leadership role this year?

• *Penelope*: Organising "Break the Rules Day" where we raised £1000 for our school.

• *Nikki*: I loved how one idea could grow into a big project that all of us Art Captains would work on together to help make a difference in our school.

• *Jessie*: Sharing ideas and working as a team to organise Friendship Day.

Q Do you have any advice for next year's leadership team?

• *Nikki*: Don't hold back! Speak out when you have an idea as even the smallest ideas might turn into the next big project.

• *Jessie*: Listen to each other's ideas; remember that everyone's view is valid

• *Penelope*: Have fun! Leadership is an incredible opportunity to make a difference, support others and showcase your skills.

Jessie, Penelope and Nikki all agreed that the skills they have developed will be useful when they move to their secondary schools, especially communication, organisation and confidence.

We think that these tips demonstrate a strong foundation for their personal and professional growth. Their dedication and hard work have not only enriched their own experiences but have also positively impacted the entire school community. We are so proud of their achievements and confident that they will continue to thrive and inspire others in their future endeavours.



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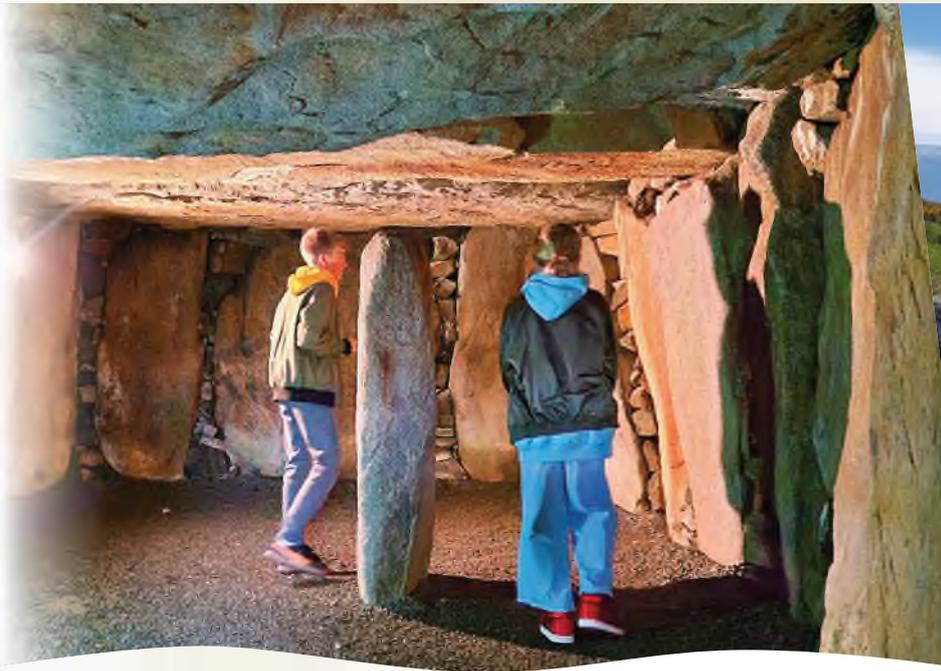
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Two days in Guernsey *by Paul Wojnicki*



“Is that Jesus?” ten-year-old Ella asks as we stare up at the ancient face of the Guardian of the Tomb carved into the megalithic tomb of Dehus Dolmen on the northeastern coast of Guernsey. “No, it’s much older than Jesus,” I tell her. “Older than Jesus!” she exclaims, looking awed.

Personally, I’m just as amazed as she is, I can’t quite believe that something this old and impressive is so freely accessible. We only disembarked our ferry from St Malo about half an hour ago and we’re already inside a four-thousand-year-old tomb.

We’ve only got two days on Guernsey, as we’re using the island as a pit-stop on our way home from France. Taking the Condor Ferries route from St Malo to Guernsey and then onto Poole is often cheaper than sailing directly from St Malo to the UK. So technically it’s a free holiday in Guernsey, as far as I’m concerned.

I’ve always wanted to visit the Channel Islands and have been looking forward to this part of our trip, so it’s a shame about the heavy rain. Still, all that means is that we use our first day to explore Guernsey’s numerous underground sites.

We marvel at the tomb for a few moments, and the kids are remarkably respectful - whispering, rather than yelling while we are inside. Back outside, the rain has abated a little and we head to two nearby fortifications. Both of these are less than five minutes away from Dehus Dolmen and again there are only a scattering of dog walkers in the general vicinity. Early spring is by no means high season, but I’m surprised how few people are here compared to similar sites on mainland Britain. I’m not sure if this is due to low season or the fact that there are so many of these forts to visit for the tourists that are here. By the end of WW2, Guernsey’s coastline was littered with concrete fortifications, bunkers, gun emplacements and tunnels, and the archipelago is said to have been the most fortified place on earth.

When the rain starts coming down more heavily, we head over to the German Underground Hospital, which is at the opposite side of the island, but still only twenty minutes away. I don’t know what I’d expected - maybe a handful of rooms underground - but what we find is a massive complex of tunnels, which feels to me like the perfect set for a horror movie. Luckily, Harrison and Ella have never watched a horror movie, so they don’t realise how creepy it sounds when they’re whistling “daisy, daisy” and the sound is echoing around the 6,950 square metre complex. As we exit, Harrison and Ella can’t believe that such a huge network can exist underground, when all we can see from the surface is the entrance.

Next, we head to the Little Chapel, which is a three-minute drive away. It’s easy to see where the Little Chapel gets its name from, because it looks tiny when viewed from the pathway. So tiny in fact I’m not sure it will be big enough to fit me inside, but as well as being unbelievably ornate, it’s also something of a Tardis, with the vast proportion of the chapel being built into the hillside and invisible from the outside. It only takes a few moments to walk from the main entrance to the hidden exit at the foot of the hill, but the interior - decorated with pebbles, seashells and broken pottery - is so unique that the children want to go through several times.

The following day, the sun is shining, and we decide to spend the day at one of Guernsey’s many beaches. First, we head to Chuet Bay, where the kids spend several hours doing what they do best on the beach... digging. The sand is light and the water a beautiful cobalt hue, and we could easily be in Bermuda - until we step in the sea that is, which is just touching 11 degrees at this time of year. Still, that isn’t stopping around a dozen or so - elderly - swimmers who are in the sea for close to an hour while we’re there; without wetsuits I might add. Harrison and I manage to get up to our waists, while



mum and Ella shake their heads and laugh at us from the sand.

Then we head to Vazon Bay, for more digging, while watching the surfers riding long unbroken waves, and we all resolve to return to Guernsey next year, on our way to Brittany and Domaine des Ormes.

• Practicalities

Condor Ferries operate daily ferries between Poole, Guernsey and St Malo. At the time of writing they were being acquired by Brittany Ferries, so are now bookable on both websites. A great way to visit Guernsey is to take Condor Ferries in one direction, with a stopover in Guernsey, and use the Brittany Ferries service in the other direction, directly to /from St Malo or Cherbourg and the UK.



The making of a school captain



Each year at The Manchester Grammar School, one student is chosen to serve as School Captain - an ambassador and leader within the school community. This year, the honour goes to Donte, a Year 12 pupil and former President of the school's African and Caribbean Society. M&D asked Donte to share his thoughts on his journey - from a shy boy in his first year of secondary school to a confident sixth former and School Captain at one of the most prestigious schools in the country.

The six years I have spent at MGS so far have been nothing short of enjoyable and fulfilling.

Starting in Year 7, I was the only boy from my primary school to attend. The grandeur and highly academic atmosphere of the school grounds were unlike anything I had ever encountered. Yet, despite my initial

nerves, I felt an overwhelming sense of belonging. I threw myself wholeheartedly into the vast array of opportunities on offer, finding in MGS what I had not experienced before - a place that truly allowed me to nurture my ambition. It was at this moment I transitioned from a bright young boy into a genuine scholar at heart.

Coming from a small, local primary school in West Gorton, MGS felt like a completely different world. I still remember my very first time on site: the scale of the buildings, the energy in the corridors, and the strong sense of purpose all around me. I was the only boy from my primary school to attend that year, and I arrived full of nerves. Almost immediately, what struck me wasn't just the academic excellence - it was the culture of curiosity and ambition. I quickly realised this was a place that didn't just expect great things from its pupils but actively sup-

ported them in achieving those things. Despite how grand and unfamiliar it all seemed at first, I felt a deep sense of unity among the current pupils and my fellow applicants alike.

Looking back, I can see how MGS has consistently inspired and challenged me, both within and beyond the classroom. Through captivating lessons and a wealth of extracurricular activities, I have been fortunate enough to cultivate skills and passions that stretch far beyond the traditional curriculum. From debating competitions and sports fixtures to mentoring and leadership roles, MGS has always pushed me to strive for my best. Each opportunity has shaped me, instilling the values of resilience, integrity, and a genuine love for learning. For me, there can be no greater honour than being chosen as School Captain, offering me the chance to give back to the remarkable institution and community that has given me so much.

One of the aspects of MGS that I value most is our unwavering commitment to educational equity. Since its founding in 1515, 'for the education of poor boys in godliness and good learning,' the school has steadfastly championed the idea that background should never be a barrier to education—a principle that resonates deeply with me. I take immense pride in belonging to and serving an institution that passionately supports this vision. Through its bursary schemes and outreach initiatives, MGS ensures that talent and ambition are fostered, regardless of financial circumstances. This dedication to accessibility and inclusivity is something I am eager to advocate for during my tenure as School Captain. The diverse range of individuals within the school, as well as among Old Mancunians, is a testament to the fact that at MGS, anyone from any background can truly embody the qualities of a scholar and a gentleman.

If you're a pupil or a parent wondering whether MGS is the right place for you, my advice is simple: visit. Come and see it for yourself. I know how easy it is to fall into the trap of thinking that "a school like this isn't for people like me". The truth is; it absolutely is. MGS is a place for the curious, the ambitious, the passionate - for anyone with a spark who wants to see how far it can take them. The range of extracurricular activities and societies is vast, more akin to a university than a secondary school. Whatever your interests, whether Science, Languages, Sport or Music, there's a place for you here. More than anything, MGS is a nurturing, inclusive environment where talent is recognised, and potential is grown. If you have the drive, MGS will meet you with opportunity •



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