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# Annual Boarding Conference

28-29  
JANUARY  
2025

*Boarding perspectives:  
Learning within, leading beyond*

**CONFERENCE CHAIR:** WILL GOLDSMITH, HEAD, PACKWOOD SCHOOL

**VENUE:** CROWNE PLAZA, NOTTINGHAM

# Day 1

## Tuesday 28 January: Learning within, leading beyond

### 10:30 Registration and refreshments

### 11:00 Welcome

- David Walker, Executive Director, Boarding and Director BSA/TIOB

### 11:05 Chair's address

- Will Goldsmith, Conference Chair 2025 and Head, Packwood School  
*BSA Chair 2025 will look at how the boarding sector can learn within and lead beyond in today's changeable world.*

### 11:25 Online safety: Recognising and responding to online risks

- David Wright, CBE, CEO, SWGfL & Director, UK Safer Internet Centre  
*Global digital safety expert, David Wright, will discuss strategies to manage boarders' wellbeing in shared digital spaces. He will provide tips on developing digital resilience including setting effective filters, monitoring, and statutory safeguarding expectations.*

### 12:15 Global village round table

*Bring your top three head-scratchers for each topic*

#### 1 CREATING A HOME FROM HOME

- David Walker, Executive Director, Boarding and Director BSA/TIOB  
*Discuss the practicalities of creating the ideal boarding environment on a budget.*

#### 2 SAFEGUARDING AND COMPLIANCE

- Dale Wilkins, Executive Director, Scotland/Wales and Accredited/Compliance, BSA Group  
*Understand the latest safeguarding requirements and share best practice.*

#### 3 INTEGRATING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Beth Hudson, Executive Director, Specialist Services, BSA Group and Director, BAISIS  
*Share tips on successful recruitment and integration of international students.*

#### 4 IMMIGRATION 101

- Kate Hollyer, Executive Director, Legal & Public Affairs & Partner, BSA Legal Services  
*Raise your UKVI concerns and experiences with an immigration expert.*

#### 5 MARKETING BOARDING

- Aileen Kane, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO, BSA Group  
*Discuss positioning and promoting boarding in a competitive global market.*

### 13:15 Networking lunch

### 14:15 Breakout discussions

#### 1 UK COMPLIANCE

- Kate Hollyer, Legal & Public Affairs & Partner, BSA Legal Services
- Dale Wilkins, Executive Director, Scotland/Wales and Accredited/Compliance, BSA Group  
*Discuss the latest updates and implications for boarding with compliance specialists.*

#### 2 RUNNING INTERNATIONAL (OUTSIDE UK) BOARDING HOUSES

- Beth Hudson, Executive Director, Specialist Services, BSA Group and Director, BAISIS
- David Walker, Executive Director, Boarding and Director BSA/TIOB  
*Bounce ideas off one another and our facilitators, who have worked in Africa and Switzerland.*

### 15:15 Refreshments and networking

### 15:45 Fireside chat: The importance of proactive inclusion

- Candice Brathwaite, Writer and TV Personality  
*Bestselling author, Candice Brathwaite, will share her thoughts on how schools can ensure proactive inclusion and representation, drawing on her acclaimed life lessons for black teenagers and her experience of independent education as a parent.*

### 17:00 Close of day one

### 19:00 Drinks reception - Sponsored by IGTM

Music by Trent College students

### 19:30 Annual conference dinner

After dinner speaker: Wendy Griffiths, Chair, Independent Schools Examinations Board



# Day 2

## Wednesday 29 January: Learning within, leading beyond

### 09:30 Global boarding trends

- David Walker, Executive Director, Boarding and Director BSA/TIOB  
*The latest trends, concerns and opportunities as reported by BSA member schools around the world.*

### 10:00 All roads lead to boarding

- Ashley Smith, Deputy Head of Boarding, Worthgate School
- Jessica Watts, House Matron, Abbey College Cambridge
- Ian Lloyd, Interim Deputy Head, LVS Ascot  
*Senior boarding professionals with non-conventional career paths will discuss why they moved to boarding, culture shock and lessons learned, transferrable skills, the importance of diverse teams, and how to successfully recruit outside the sector.*

### 10:45 Refreshments and networking

### 11:15 Breakout discussions

#### 1 EDUCATION LAW UPDATE: UNDERSTANDING NEURODIVERSITY

- Ben Collingwood, Partner, Moore Barlow
- Adam McRae-Taylor, Legal Director, Moore Barlow  
*Specialist independent education lawyers will give an update on neurodiversity: the increase in requests for support, latest guidance and regulation, reasonable adjustments, and practical tips.*

#### 2 A PROFILE ANALYSIS OF THE CONTEMPORARY BOARDING SCHOOL PARENT

- Guy Shady-Beckett, Director and Head of Research, Next Step Education  
*Guy Shady-Beckett will draw on his global experience dealing with boarding families to lead this breakout session on what parents look for and common concerns.*

#### 3 STATE BOARDING

- Dale Wilkins, Executive Director, Scotland/Wales and Accredited/Compliance, BSA Group  
*With lived experience working in state boarding, Dale Wilkins will consider the latest developments in the sector and what this means for your school.*

### 12:00 Self-disclosure and bullying in an East African context

- Mark Buckler, Deputy Head (Pastoral), St Andrew's Senior School, Turi  
*Mark Buckler will share insights from his research on bullying in an East African school, with globally relevant takeaways.*

### 12:15 Educational migration of Chinese families to the UK

- Andrea Kis, Doctoral Researcher, University of Sussex  
*Andrea Kis will share her longitudinal, multi-sited ethnographic research on educational migration strategies of Chinese families.*

### 12:30 Networking lunch

### 13:15 The boarding o-zone: Preparing students for life after school

- Paddy Rockett, Head of Middle School Boarding, Reed's School  
*You've devoted your career to creating the optimal boarding experience but what happens after school? This session will outline a proposed national framework and tips to equip your students with the skills to succeed in the real world.*

### 14:15 How to tackle vaping in your school

- Dr Jasmine Khouja, Senior Research Associate, The Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group, University of Bristol
- Ed Gyde, CEO, Audience Social Marketing, whose campaign experience includes delivering the 'Talk to FRANK' and '5 a day' initiatives  
*Our expert speakers will cover the dangers of vaping and the science behind why young people vape, as well as effective messaging to use in your school based on years of designing and delivering youth campaigns against addictive substances.*

### 15:15 Refreshments and networking

### 15:30 Social media and tech-facilitated abuse: Digital literacy for empowered futures

- Professor Jessica Ringrose, Co-director, UCL Centre for Sociology of Education and Equity  
*Professor Jessica Ringrose will share findings from her latest research into youth digital cultures and online safety, with a focus on the importance and role of education in preventing online misogyny and tech-facilitated sexual violence.*

### 16:30 Close of conference



**David Walker**  
Executive Director  
Boarding and  
Director BSA/TIOB

David joined the BSA group in August 2023. He has over 20 years' experience in boarding schools and has worked in a range of schools in the UK and Africa, alongside being a prep school governor and a trustee of a MAT. Before taking up his post at the BSA, David was Deputy Head Pastoral at a large co-ed independent school in the South-East.



**Will Goldsmith**  
Conference Chair 2025  
and Head  
Packwood School

Will has a career spanning almost twenty years in boarding education and leadership. He is currently Head of Packwood School. Will is passionate about a skills and mindset-based learning philosophy and has a background in emotional wellbeing and mental health. He is a founding fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and Royal Society of the Arts.



**David Wright CBE**  
CEO, SWGfL  
and Director  
UK Safer Internet Centre

David has worked extensively in online safety for 20 years with children, schools and wider agencies. He advises a number of governments, organisations and industry partners on online safety strategy and policy and has been appointed an expert child online protection adviser to the UN ITU and nominated by UK Government as an expert to the Council of Europe Tech Facilitated Gender Based Violence committee. David is a member of the UK Council for Internet Safety and has recently been invited to be a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Coalition for Digital Safety. David has led pioneering work, such as the development of multi award winning resources and helplines for victims of online harm and, with Plymouth University, published a number of ground-breaking research reports.



**Dale Wilkins**  
Executive Director, Scotland/Wales  
and Accredited/Compliance  
BSA Group

Dale joined the BSA in 2017. Dale leads on all safeguarding and inspection matters for the BSA, including managing the Commitment to Care Charter, and has developed a process of BSA Accreditation for international members. He also liaises with ISI, Ofsted and DfE on matters relating to compliance and inspection standards, and compiles the BSA Self-Assessment toolkit. For 31 years Dale was a boarding practitioner. After boarding positions at Norwich School and Tettenhall College, Dale became a Housemaster at Old Swinford Hospital in 1992, and was promoted to Deputy Head in 2007, and subsequently also DSL. He has also been a multi-agency trainer for the Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board.



**Wendy Griffiths**  
Chair, Independent Schools  
Examinations Board

Wendy has been Chair of the Board of the Independent Schools Examinations Board (ISEB) since February 2022. Before this she was Head of Tudor Hall School, an all-girls full boarding school. She has held the senior leadership roles of Director of Studies at St Catherine's School, Bramley, and Senior Mistress at Tornead School, Guildford. During her time as Head Wendy was the Chair of the Boarding Schools' Association (BSA), a member of the Executive of the Girls' Schools Association (GSA) and Chair of the GSA Boarding Committee. She has previously served on board of five boarding prep schools and is currently on the board of Westbourne House School, Chichester and on the Council of Wycombe Abbey.



**Ashley Smith**  
Deputy Head of Boarding  
Worthgate School

Ashley has quickly risen through the ranks at Worthgate in just under three years. Beginning at Worthgate on a zero-hour contract without experience in education or boarding, and originally from a background in printing, the transition into boarding has revealed a deep-seated purpose and passion for working with young people. Promoted to Deputy Head of Boarding in August 2024, Ashley has a desire to guide students through their unique journeys, striving to foster a nurturing environment and shape positive, supportive, and impactful experiences for students and staff alike.



**Jessica Watts**  
House Matron  
Abbey College Cambridge

Jessica joined the boarding sector in September 2023 after a long career in NHS management, working in hospitals, ambulance services and public health, having graduated in anatomical sciences and subsequently studied for a masters in health services management. Jessica currently works at Abbey College Cambridge, an independent sixth form college, as a House Matron, having started as a House Parent. Jessica is also a member of the Human Tissue Authority which regulates the use of human tissues and organs, and holds sports volunteering positions in cricket and swimming.



**Ian Lloyd**  
Interim Deputy Head  
LVS Ascot

Ian has taken a rather non-standard route into education after having enjoyed successful careers in both engineering and financial services sectors. During the first 14 years of his career, Ian trained as an apprentice aircraft technician at British Aerospace before moving into high-street banking, personal finance, occupational pensions and high net worth client investment planning. Moving into education in the early noughties, he now has 20 years' experience in the sector, working in local government and state secondary schools before switching to the independent boarding school sector 8 years ago as Senior Deputy Headmaster of Myddelton College in North Wales and most recently Interim Deputy Head of LVS Ascot. He is passionate about the judicious use of technology to support teaching, learning and streamlining the administrative functions of education, saving staff valuable time to focus on what they do best – supporting, guiding and teaching children.



**Beth Hudson**  
Executive Director  
Specialist Services and Director  
BAISIS, BAISIS

Bethan joined the BSA team as Training Manager in 2017. Bethan has worked in two independent boarding schools in the UK and Switzerland, the latter as Housemistress to 36 pupils. Following her time in Switzerland, she was a Pastoral Manager for an inner-city state academy before working in the charity sector for Debrett's running the 'Debrett's Foundation' training programme. In her role, Bethan plans and manages all day seminars, conferences, INSET and consultancy, as well as being Director of BAISIS. She believes boarding can be a positive force for young people and in order to fully support their needs staff can never learn too much. As such she is passionate about the CPD BSA delivers to our pastoral communities in the UK and worldwide.



**Kate Hollyer**  
Executive Director  
Legal & Public Affairs & Partner  
BSA Group

As a qualified solicitor with more than 10 years' experience advising clients on UK immigration law, Kate assists members with all immigration and safeguarding legal matters. Prior to joining BSA in 2022 Kate was Partner and Head of Department at a leading full-service UK law firm. Having resided in state, preparatory and senior school boarding houses since 2014 with her Housemaster husband, Kate has a unique perspective of boarding life.



**Aileen Kane**  
Deputy CEO and  
Chief Operating Officer  
BSA Group

Aileen leads operations at BSA providing guidance and training and works closely with government departments, local authorities and other agencies to support members. She heads up the group's work to find places for refugee children escaping from conflict countries and is also a trustee for a children's charity.



**Candice Brathwaite**  
Writer  
and TV Personality

Candice is a critically acclaimed writer and TV personality with over half a million devotees on social media. Successful in non-fiction and fiction spaces, her first book I am not your Baby Mother, examining the inequalities of Black motherhood, was a Sunday Times Bestseller. Her hit podcast Closet Confessions has amassed millions of downloads and tours nationally. Candice is Contributing Editor to Grazia and regularly appears on national radio and television news channels where she is a straight-talking and courageous voice on achieving your goals, fashion, family and the Black British experience.



**Ben Collingwood**  
Partner  
Moore Barlow

Ben specialises in advising independent schools and other charities on wide ranging areas of education law, with particular focus on reputation issues, pastoral, safeguarding, historic abuse allegations, SEN, exclusions, parent/pupil complaints, data protection, parent contracts, admissions and staff matters of all types. He has written and spoken widely on issues facing the independent schools sector, providing comment in The Times, The Guardian, The Lawyer and Law Society's Gazette and at the national conferences and training programmes for the various associations that support independent schools including BSA, ISBA, HMC, IAPS and AGBIS.



**Adam McRae-Taylor**  
Legal Director  
Moore Barlow

Adam specialises in employment and education law and advises on issues such as unfair dismissal, discrimination cases, safeguarding, parent contracts and data protection. Adam trained and qualified in employment law with a Magic Circle firm in London. Before joining the Schools & Charities Team at Moore Barlow, he spent two years working in-house for a charity.



**Guy Schady-Beckett**  
Director and Head of Research  
Next Step Education

Guy has served as Director and Head of Research at Next Step Education Limited (Independent Schools Show & Bonas MacFarlane) since 2014. Previously he ran Drayson Beckett Limited, a specialist education consultancy working long-term with schools and universities on business development (with a focus on digital transition), market research and brand / product repositioning for 20 years. Prior to that he taught English at Windlesham and Durston House. He holds a PhD and an MA in History from Birkbeck, University of London, with distinction honours, as well as a second MA from University of the Arts London. His BA was in English from UCL.



**Andrea Kis**  
Doctoral Researcher  
University of Sussex

Andrea lived in China from 2010 to 2019, where she tutored and mentored middle school students, taught at the Sir Horace Kadoorie Youth Development Center, Sino-British College, and at both JiaoTong and FuDan Universities in Shanghai. She is currently a departmental tutor in the Social Anthropology Department at the University of Sussex, leading a seminar on Ethnography through Film while completing the final draft of her doctoral thesis on Chinese families' elite education-migration to the UK. She is particularly interested in how current social transformations in China intersect with evolving parenting styles, family structures, and migration practices.



**Mark Buckler**  
Deputy Head (Pastoral)  
St Andrew's Senior School  
Turi

Mark has served at St Andrew's School, Turi in Kenya for the past seven years alongside his family. Previously, he held leadership roles at Kingham Hill School in Oxfordshire, including Head of Conduct and Head of Art. Mark recently earned distinction for his master's dissertation, which focused on the pressing issue of bullying perpetration in an East African school context. His research continues to inform his work, equipping both the school and the wider community with strategies to foster a positive, proactive approach to addressing bullying and promoting healthy relationships among young people and adults.



**Paddy Rockett**  
Head of Middle School Boarding  
Reed's School

Paddy is the Head of Middle School Boarding/Housemaster at Reed's School in Surrey. Paddy has been through the Pastoral Care module and Boarding Management module run by the BSA and is currently completing his Masters in Residential Education with the University of Buckingham. His current area of research is focussed on the development of life skills in boarding houses and the development of a national programme for life skills development. Previously, Paddy was a lead in the "Broadening the Curriculum" strategy of the University of Limerick designing a social responsibility module undertaken by first year students. As a Biology teacher he is interested in the use of VR and AR in the teaching of Science. He is also interested in Pastoral care, the development of Boarding nationally and internationally and social mobility.



**Dr Jasmine Khouja**  
Senior Research Associate  
The Tobacco and Alcohol  
Research Group  
University of Bristol

Jasmine's work focuses on the causes and consequences of e-cigarette use as well as the potential impact that e-cigarette policy changes could have on adult smokers, adult vapers and young people. Using a range of methods (including novel methods in genetic epidemiology), she has explored a wide variety of topics, including the gateway hypothesis, possible health effects of vaping, and the potential impact of hypothetical e-liquid flavour bans. The overall aims of Jasmine's research are to reduce health inequalities and to provide supporting evidence for policies and regulations which protect young people from harm and discourage smoking.



**Ed Gyde**  
CEO, Audience Social Marketing, whose  
campaign experience includes  
delivering the 'Talk to FRANK'  
and '5 a day' initiatives

Ed has lived and breathed health campaigns for two decades. Coming from a medical family he is Audience Social Marketing's public health lead and has shaped many of the biggest national public health campaigns: '5 a day', Talk to FRANK (drugs education) and Know Your Limits (alcohol education).



**Professor Jessica Ringrose**  
Co-director, UCL Centre for Sociology  
of Education and Equity

Jessica has lived and conducted research in England for 21 years, developing an extensive public engagement profile and informing policy and practice across education, communications, health and justice. Her research specialisms are youth digital cultures and online safety. Recent projects focus on developing education to prevent tech-facilitated gender-based and sexual violence and online misogyny. She is a widely cited and internationally recognized expert in these fields and in 2020 was the recipient of The American Educational Research Association (AERA) Distinguished Contributions to Gender Equity in Education Award. Her latest book, Teens, Social Media and Image Based Abuse, is out in early 2025.



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