

Series 3 – 2023-24

#EdInfluence podcast (series 3) - in conversation with inspiring leaders

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After a pandemic-induced hiatus, our #EdInfluence podcast returned for the 2023-24 academic year with an all-new series featuring a diverse range of inspiring leaders.

Hosted by our leading education lawyer and accredited executive coach Nick MacKenzie, #EdInfluence features interviews with influential leaders from across the sector and beyond to explore the human side of leadership.

A full episode guide and more information on our guests are available below. You can listen to the podcast here or on [your preferred podcast channel](#), including: [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Google Podcasts](#) and [Amazon Music](#).

In his inimitable style, Nick unearths the secrets of good leadership from his guests. Setting out the vision for the third series of #EdInfluence Nick said:

“Every generation seems to have a preoccupation with finding the secrets of good leadership. In this series, we don’t want to repeat ‘soundbites’, the emphasis will be on providing relatable, human stories that influences listeners thinking... and hopefully their actions!”

[Catch-up on series 4](#) →

[Catch-up on series 2](#) →

[Catch-up on series 1](#) →

Episode 12: Series 3 Retrospective with Emma Hughes and Iain Blatherwick

In the final episode of this series of #EdInfluence, Nick hosts a special retrospective with colleagues and fellow executive coaches Emma Hughes and Iain Blatherwick. Together, they reflect on the highlights, recurring themes and hard-hitting ideas shared by guests throughout Series 3 of #EdInfluence.

Emma Hughes is a partner at Browne Jacobson, Head of HR Services and Chartered Fellow of the CIPD. Among Emma's takeaways from this series of EdInfluence are:

- How experience at a young age can shape leaders and instil key qualities such as resilience and resourcefulness.
- The value of gathering diverse views, surrounding yourself with people who will keep you honest and help course correct.
- How important psychological safety is to organisational culture - you've got to be able to fail.
- Leadership vulnerability - leaders showing their vulnerability can have a ripple effect.

Iain was Managing Partner at Browne Jacobson for 11 years and specialises in advising on governance and leadership issues. Iain's reflections on the series include:

- Striking a balance of accountability: 'sometimes doing nothing is doing something' vs. 'that which you walk past is to condone.'
- The importance of listening and being listened to, to build relationships and trust.
- Leadership is about influence. It's not the loudest person, or the one who's speaking the most.
- Encouraging storytelling and sharing information to discover connections help build a sense of belonging.

Listen now to hear more reflections on the powerful leadership insights we've gained this series.

Episode 11: John Camp OBE and ASCL Conference 2024

In the latest episode of EdInfluence we hear from [John Camp OBE](#), President of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and CEO of the Compass Partnership of Schools, a charitable trust of twelve schools in Greenwich and Essex.

John believes passionately in collaboration and that leaders should focus on habit of mind and habit of action as they build institutional growth and resilience.

We also hear from other sector leaders from the floor of this year's ASCL Conference, including:

- [Dr Peter Kent](#), Trustee and Past President of ASCL and the International Confederation of Principals (ICP).
- [Julie McCulloch](#), Director of Policy at ASCL.
- [Anna Crawte](#) - School Improvement Director from HEART Academies Trust.
- [Mark Blois](#), Partner and former Head of Education at Browne Jacobson.
- [Emma Balchin](#), Co-Chief Exec of the National Governance Association (NGA).

They give their perspectives on what makes an effective leader, the qualities they see in children that they wish they had and share strategies for sustaining their energy levels as a leader.

Listen now to hear more leadership insight from John and our other special guests.

Episode 10: Janice Kay

In this episode we hear from Janice Kay CBE, Director of Higher Futures, former Provost and now Special Advisor to the Vice Chancellor at the University of Exeter. Janice also Chairs the Board of Trustees for University Maths Schools (U-Maths), the University Maths Schools Network formed of 11 schools across the country.

In conversation with Nick MacKenzie, Janice talks about what's shaped her as a leader, referring to the time when she became Deputy Vice Chancellor when the University of Exeter was in serious financial difficulties:

"I learned that planning is everything. The idea was to cut, but not so deeply that we couldn't build back and then to build back in areas that we knew we could grow and thrive in."

"I also learned that leadership is not a game, that you are dealing with people's lives, your staff and your students, and that you always owe them a duty of care, respect and kindness. So, it was months of sleepless nights and worry, I think, for a lot of people, but it really forged me as a leader, and I learnt a lot."

Listen now to hear more leadership insight from Janet.

Episode 9: Dan Kayne

Dan Kayne, the founder of O Shaped explains why he's committed to making the legal profession better, by putting people first. His approach to leadership development creates a much more human and personable way of engaging with business colleagues.

Dan trained at Dechert LLP before moving in-house to Network Rail in 2007. From 2016 to 2022 Dan was General Counsel at Network Rail, leading a team of 20 lawyers who consistently achieved the highest engagement scores across the company.

Dan talks about how he was inspired by the surgeon who operated on his critically ill son and how this experience led to him bringing his 'people first' ethos to the legal profession:

"...how do we bring humanity into the legal profession and make it part of our everyday work? As a profession, we'd got it wholly wrong. We'd got it in a space where technical excellence was considered the be-all and end-all. What I'd seen in a much more critical environment, was that you could combine that technical excellence with compassion, with humanity, with the warmth."

Listen now to find out more.

Episode 8: Professor Edward Peck

Hear from Professor Edward Peck, Vice-Chancellor of Nottingham Trent University and Deputy Chair of UCAS. In conversation with Nick MacKenzie, Edward talks about how his childhood and the early years of his career in the NHS, helped shaped him as a leader:

"When I was 11 a close relative was sectioned into a Victorian asylum.

When I was a graduate trainee, (about 12-13 years later), I went to spend time in a Victorian asylum, and thought 'blimey, they're still doing this to people!'

I got very interested in liberating people. [...] some of the most marginalised people in our society."

These themes have clearly continued throughout Professor Peck's career, which have since helped bring the values of the organisations he's led to life and enabled him to deliver success for social impact projects such as the Mansfield Initiative.

Listen now to find out how.

Episode 7: Dawn Haywood

Hear from Dawn Haywood, CEO of Windsor Academy Trust who shares what has shaped her as a leader:

"Sport has shaped my identity. I'm a firm believer that every single child has something that they are good at. Our job as educators is to find that thing. For me, that was sport. Today as a leader I draw upon my experiences in education, but I fundamentally draw more on my experiences in sport to help me."

Dawn sits on the DfE Priority Education Investment Area Local Partnership Boards for both Sandwell and Walsall and is also a member of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST) Inquiry focused on how School Trusts drive school improvement.

Episode 6: Rebecca Boomer-Clark

In this episode of EdInfluence we hear from Rebecca Boomer-Clark, the Chief Executive Officer of Academies Enterprise Trust, one of the country's largest multi-academy trusts. An experienced school leader, she was Director of Secondary at Ark Schools from 2017 to 2021.

Prior to that, she worked for the Department for Education (DfE) as Regional Schools Commissioner for South-West England and was National Education Director for Oasis Community Learning.

Rebecca shares her views on some of the challenges education leaders face: *"Naturally we can be quite hierarchical in education. I think that that can have a constraining influence."* She believes the answer lies in the power of people: *"One of the most powerful forces in any context is the power of networks. What people can do when they're connected behind a shared endeavour or common purpose."*

Episode 5: John Murphy

In this episode of EdInfluence we hear from John Murphy, former Chief Executive of Oasis Community Learning, one of the UK's largest multi-academy trusts with 52 primary and secondary Academies clustered in five regions across the country. He is also a Trustee of the Place2Be national mental health charity for young people and E-ACT Multi Academy Trust.

Over three decades of experience in school leadership John has dedicated his career to raising aspirations for young people and closing the attainment gap for the most disadvantaged. In conversation with Nick MacKenzie, he explains:

"The passion I've got around education is making sure that children are heard, they're not left behind, and that we create a better society. Education is such an important golden ticket for children, but it's the love, care and attention that they get."

Episode 4: Catherine Baker

In this episode of EdInfluence we hear from Catherine Baker, the Chair of O Shaped and Founder and Director of Sport and Beyond Ltd.

Catherine is an ex-Linklaters lawyer who has, for the second half of her career focused on leadership and mindset. She specialises in blending business and sports insight to drive performance, coaching CEOs and other senior leaders to improve and develop their leadership skillset.

Catherine strongly believes that for successful leadership, "personal connection is absolutely critical". In this episode, she draws from her unique career experience to explore the importance of connection, sharing ideas on how to inspire belief to enable progress sustain performance.

Episode 3: Sir Julian Hartley

In the third episode of EdInfluence Season 3, we hear from Dr Julian Hartley, who joined NHS Providers as chief executive in February 2023, having been chief executive of Leeds Teaching Hospitals since 2013. He previously worked as managing director of NHS Improving Quality - a national organisation set up to drive change and improvement across the NHS.

Drawing from this wealth of experience, Julian delivers some straight-talking insight into leading cultural change in the face of adversity, believing that:

“You’ve got to tell the truth as a leader - not putting a gloss or spin on it, but actually engaging positively and seriously with the reality.”

Julian was awarded Knight Bachelor for services to healthcare in the 2022 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Episode 2: Dr Dame Ann Limb

In this second episode of EdInfluence Season 3, we hear from Dame Ann Limb DBE DL FRSA FCGI, who describes herself as ‘a philanthropist, mover and Quaker, trying to navigate her way through life by doing least harm to people and planet’.

Ann is currently Pro Chancellor of the University of Surrey, Chair of the City & Guilds of London Institute, and Board member of LTE Group in which capacity she is Chair of Governors of The Manchester College.

In March 2023, Ann was named inaugural Chair of the Lifelong Education Institute, established by ResPublica, to take forward a vision for whole-system reform. Ann co-chairs the FED Ambassadors.

Episode 1: Professor Fiona Forbes

In the first episode of EdInfluence Season 3, we hear about the importance of communication and gain a global perspective from Fiona Forbes, Professor of Practice in the School of Education at La Trobe University Victoria, Australia.

In conversation with our sector leading education lawyer Nick MacKenzie, Fiona shared her leadership insights from a 30 year+ international career in education, drawing on her experience as:

- Executive of the International Confederation of Principals (ICP)
- Chair of the Australian Special Education Principals' Association (ASEPA)
- Board Member of the Foundation for Education Development UK (FED)
- Foundation member and participant of Atlantic Rim Collaboratory (ARC)

Conference special

This special edition of #EdInfluence was recorded at the ASCL annual conference, where Nick was able to hear from a range of sector leaders, who shared their varying approaches and perspectives on leadership.

Interviewees include:

- Pepe Di'lasio - ASCL Past President & Head of Wales High School
- Liz Anderson, CEO of Djanogly Learning Trust
- Steve Rollett - Deputy Chief Executive of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST)
- Leora Cruddas CBE, Chief Executive of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST)
- Carl Ward - ASCL Past President & CEO of City Learning Trust

We'll be bringing you more episodes in the spring term, with more interviews lined up with some truly inspirational leaders. Look forward to more, in 2024!

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